

Chapter - I

Postcolonial India and Social and Political Conflicts: An Introduction

The present thesis focuses on the authorial intrusion in the ideological clashes represented in Arundhati Roy's novel *The God of Small Things* (1997). In order to show the ideological infiltration among her writings, it makes a comparative analysis of her fictional as well as non-fictional writings, including *The Algebra of Infinite Justice* (2002), *An Ordinary Person's Guide to Empire* (2006), *The Shape of the Beast* (2009) and *Listening to Grasshoppers* (2010). Moreover, it shows how Roy, in her novel, *God of Small Things*, offers a fictional rendering of her radical views on issues related to the rights of Dalits and aborigines (Adivasis). The novel also reflects her views on the Maoist movement, globalisation, decentralisation, and communal violence. While doing so, she demonstrates her ideological position as a radical social activist, and using this position, she then represents a range of conflicting political and social ideologies. At the same time, it shows how Roy's radical views overlap with the Maoist movement and its emergent ideology. By 'emergent ideology' I mean the ideology which enables the oppressed subject to see the reality as it is and encourages resisting the dominance of the exploiting class.

The God of Small Things is set in the post independent Indian state of Kerala which historically has been the hotbed of conflicts of various forms religious, social, political and economic forces that have operated since pre-colonial and colonial times. India has been a Brahmanistic feudal society based on the caste system. Although Christianity arrived in India much earlier, the inhuman caste system continued. The advent of British colonial rule further intensified the already operative exploitation and domination. India became independent in 1947 and the native bourgeoisie came to the power with a lot of promises and programmes for the people on the margin.

India adopted the state controlled 'socialist' economy. But they turned out to be empty and vacuous. The traditional exploitation and domination continued in modified form. In 1957 Kerala became the first Indian state to have an elected communist government led by E. M. S. Namboodiripad. His party came to power again in 1967. But scholars opine that it could/did not effect change in the old form of dominance worth mentioning. Rather, it worked to strengthen the status quo (Tiwary and Chandra 89- 90).

Naturally, this kind of dominance gave rise to people's discontent and resistance through movements of various sorts. These movements culminated in the Naxabari uprising which erupted in 1967 and its 'spring thunder' reverberated throughout India and shook the ruling class to its foundation. Though it was ruthlessly quelled, Susan Comfort remarks that it challenged the age long dominance of the oppressing class and kindled a ray of hope in the oppressed masses (Comfort 19). In 1991 India abandoned the state controlled economy and went for neo-liberal economy a massive privatization (Comfort 23).

Roy's *The God of Small Things* is fictional rendering of all the major events mentioned above. From ideological perspective, I have divided them into three categories--those supporting the traditional dominance, those claiming to challenge the dominant order but ultimately enhancing it by actions, and those challenging and resisting them. I have classified Hinduism, Christianity, colonialism, the new ruling class, and neo-liberal economy under the ideology of the exploiting or dominant class. I have analysed them under the term false consciousness. I have also shown that unconscious oppressed class also follows it. I have analysed the Marxist Party and the characters associated with it under the category 'enlightened false consciousness' because, despite their professed commitment to Marxism, they always move around

the status quo. By contrast I have interpreted the Naxalite/Maoist ideology as the emergent/resisting ideology because it is treated in Roy's works, and also historically, as a tool of the oppressed to challenge the dominant order.

Two questions prompted me to write on the ideology of the novel. One is why do characters, despite belonging to the same class/caste/gender/family, act in contrary ways and serve the interests of the opposite classes? For example, Velutha, the 'untouchable' protagonist, takes up the emergent ideology and fights the injustice, whereas Paapen, his father, goes against his steps and serves the interests of the dominant group. There are many examples of the oppressed becoming a useful tool for the oppressor. I have sought the answer to this irony in the ideology they adopt or internalise. I have set out from the assumption that an oppressed person happens to serve the interests of the oppressor if the person is guided by false consciousness which is the ideology of the ruling class because, as Marx has stated, the dominant ideology of a given society presents an upside-down picture of the reality as in a *camera obscura* (25). But if one is guided by class consciousness or the emergent ideology, he/she sees it in the true light and fights injustice and serves the interests of his/her class. So ideology is the major factor in guiding and determining the characters' actions.

The second question I posed is whether *The God of Small Things* contains an anti-communist ideology. Aijaj Ahamad has argued that it contains anti-communist ideology. But I have found that, despite the derision of the 'communist' characters like Namboodiripad and K. N. M. Pillai, it has radical ideology which resists the dominance of the ruling class. She attacks them, in the novel as well as her non-fiction, for not adopting the radical ideology, but for adopting all the duplicities of the ruling class. I have tried to show that Roy has privileged the emergent ideology by

picturing Velutha, the Naxalite protagonist and Ammu in the positive light. In order to do so, I have drawn textual evidences from her only fiction and non-fiction mentioned above.

Including the introduction and the conclusion, the thesis contains five chapters. The second, the third and the fourth chapters are structured according to the characters, events, images and symbols and the ideologies they are associated with. The second chapter shows how false consciousness operates in the novel. I have used the ideas of Marx, Engels, Althusser and Eagleton as the theoretical tools to define the role of ideology in shaping people's behaviours. I have shown it working in two ways. First, it operates through the characters and symbols associated with the dominant order like Papachi, the police inspector Thomas Mathew, the Plymouth car, the History House and the cable TV. The oppressed characters also delude themselves by false consciousness. Secondly, I have used 'enlightened false consciousness' (a term introduced by Peter Sloterdijk) to explain the characters like Chacko, Pillai and parliamentary lefts because, despite Marxist alignment, their activities prove useful to the suppressive state machinery. I have shown this in the third chapter. I have also shown that dominance results in resistance which I have discussed in the fourth chapter. In this chapter I have discussed the characters like Ammu and Velutha who adopt the emergent ideology of the Maoist movement and resist the dominant order. I have borrowed the concept of 'the emergent' from Raymond Williams. I have used class consciousness, Maoism, radicalism and emergent/resistant ideology as synonymous terms. This section of the thesis also states that Roy also expresses the same ideology, in *The God of Small Things* as well as in her non-fictions, so long as it resists the power of the brutal Indian state. In this way I have attempted to show that Roy's novel is not anti-communist in its totality.

The thesis mainly relies on textual analysis of her fiction and non-fiction placing them face to face to show how consistently the same ideology operates across them. It attempts to show how dominance of the ruling class, whether in society or in literature, invites resistance from the oppressed. I have quoted critics and scholars like Ruth Wodak, Raymond Williams, Susan Comfort, Brinda Bose and many others to form the conceptual frame of the thesis and support my points.

Chapter - II

Representation of False Consciousness as the Dominant Ideology in the Novel

Ideology is the central to any form of discourse, whether it is a highly complex work of art or everyday conversation because ideology is embedded in the language itself. No form of discourse escapes ideological alignment. In a society stratified in classes, people are conditioned by conflicting class interests and ideologies. Although one class dominates the other, the dominance is always challenged and resisted in various forms. Bakhtin envisages language as dialogic (qtd in Audi 71). So discourse is bound to reflect conflicting social relationship. So when we talk of ideology in any form of discourse, we take it as conflict and contention arising out of class struggle of a given time and place. It is composed of the unity of two conflicting ideologies: one dominant and the other resisting or emergent, serving the conflicting classes- the oppressors and the oppressed. In this regard, Ruth Wodak holds the view that, “. . . texts are often sites of struggle in that they show traces of differing discourses and ideologies contending and struggling for dominance” (11). So as a novel written by a radical political activist and written on the background of the Naxalite movement and the brutal state suppression of it, *The God of Small Things* is also a site of struggle of differing ideologies contending and struggling for dominance as suggested by Wodak.

The God of Small Things is set in the post-independent Kerala. It covers the period beginning from the mid sixties to the early nineties. The place and time of the story is very important from ideological point of view because in this period in India, various forms of religious, political cultural and economic forces contested for supremacy and dominance. For example, Christianity is believed to have arrived in Kerala centuries before it reached Europe (Tiwary and Chandra 89). The mid-sixties heard the “spring thunder” of the Naxalite movement in a small village of Naxalbari

in West Bengal and its subsequent spread throughout India. It also saw the nationalist slogans like “Be Indian By Indian” as well as so called green revolution based on the extensive use of machine and chemicals to boost up agricultural production with utter failure (SinghaRoy 94-95). The early period of independence proudly announced so called socialism as the country’s political system and the early nineties began to boast of the libratory boon of neo-liberalism. In 1967 Kerala saw the rule of the Marxist government for the second time. Despite all these, alongside with Americanised global culture which manifests in internet and cable television, the post independent India still bears the burden of caste system, a chronic evil devised, and to a large extent proudly practised, by Brahmanism. In brief the setting and background of *The God of Small Things* is the space for contention for various cultural and political forces, trends and traditions (Tickell 26-27).

The plot of the novel revolves around the members of the three generations of the Ipe family in Ayamenem in Kerala. They include: Benaan John Ipe (Papachi), his wife Soshamma (Mammachi), their two children Chacko and Ammu and their unmarried aunt Baby Kochamma. Chacko has a daughter (from a British woman) named Sophie who dies later while boating on the river with Estha and Rahel, the dizygotic twins from Ammu, a divorcee daughter of the family. Kochu Maria, the cook, is also important, as a member of the family and a character. Velutha, an accomplished ‘untouchable’ carpenter, makes love with Ammu and later is killed by the police. There are other characters like Vellya Paapen, Velutha’s father, Comrade K. N. M. Pillai and Thomas Mathews, the police inspector who are entangled with the major events of the novel.

The Ipe family constitutes a miniature India because the relationships that operate in it and its surrounding are those of the struggle for maintaining the

dominance by the oppressors and resistance of the oppressed masses to it. These characters can be divided mainly into two opposing camps for the roles they play guided by the ideologies irrespective of their sharing same socio-economic background.

The God of Small Things represents the ideology of the ruling class as the dominant ideology. It becomes manifest in the characters like Papachi, Chacko, Mr. Hollick, Thomas Mathew with their affiliations to many religious and conventional institutions. These characters find the established social, cultural and political relations in their interests and contribute to maintain and consolidate the status quo.

The novel mirrors struggles of various sorts in the post Independent Indian society. India became independent from the British colonial rule in 1947. Many scholars agree that the much cherished independence made hardly any difference in the lives of common Indians. The new rulers of the independent India simply followed the footsteps of the colonial rulers. Gandhi himself is reported to have remarked the independence as “a wooden loaf” (qtd in Roy, *Shape* 53). Roy herself has a very similar view on this matter. In her essay “Public Power in the Age of Empire” she states that “India’s freedom struggle, though magnificent, was by no means revolutionary. The Indian elite stepped easily and elegantly into shoes of the British imperialists” (*Ordinary* 281-82). Here she echoes Fanon who was very wary about the role of the native bourgeoisie and the consumption of benefit of independence by this class in the postcolonial nations. In his opinion “the national bourgeoisie steps into the shoes of the former European settlement” (Fanon 122).

Both Roy and Fanon argue that independence makes no fundamental difference in the condition of the so called postcolonial society because in place of colonial exploitation, the exploitation of the native elite takes place. In the particular

case of India, this means the brutal exploitation of Dalits, Adivasis, peasants and minority groups by the national and international capitalists. This means replacement of the old form of exploitation, suppression and domination by new form by the state that has settled itself into “the shoes of the British imperialists.” In Roy’s words, “The central function of the state will be to oversee the repression of an unemployed, dispossessed population on behalf of the corporates. The state will have to evolve into an elaborate tyranny which retains all the rhetoric of democracy” (*Shape* 178). She has emphasized that the post independent Indian state is repressive; it only serves the interests of the corporate groups and the Indian democracy is phoney because there is no real democracy for the largest section of the population. Dominance based on class, caste and gender has been continued in no less brutally than in the pre- colonial and the colonial period. These claims are well supported by facts and figures.

Many scholars find the post independent India disheartening for the rural peasantry. Debal K. SinghaRoy argues that “The Indian National Congress (INC) mobilized the peasantry for the freedom struggle with the promise of abolition of the *zamindari* system and the distribution of land among the landless.”(94). But, according to him, as India got freedom, the promise of land reform “receded into background” and economists and policy makers quickly persuaded themselves that “new technologies held the key to solving the problems of. . .socio-economic inequalities in rural society” (SinghRoy 94). Arundhati Roy herself cites the Indian Planning Commission which reports that, “Half of India’s rural population a food energy intake below the average of sub-Saharan Africa” (*Shape* 174). She, however, believes that this figure is manipulated and much reduced.

Independence did not end internal domination. Rather, it intensified the conflict between the rich and the poor. Elucidating the growing class contradiction in

the post independent India, Sudeep Chakravarti maintains that “With extreme inequity, the two Indias will irrevocably remain two. And often, at war with each other.” (7). The Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist), a Maoist communist faction, designates India’s socio-political condition as “semi-colonial and semi-feudal” and the Indian state as “a state of the big landlords and comprador-bureaucrat capitalists” (qtd in Prakash Singh 27).

The discussion above leads us to the conclusion that the independence of India in 1947 has brought about hardly any changes in the fundamental character of the Indian society and the lives of the working class people. What has changed is its rulers who have been trained and educated in colonial pattern and tradition. In place of the colonial rule of the empire there is the oppressive rule of the native exploiters. Rural workers, Adivasis, Dalits and women are more and more marginalized and suppressed. So the old form of dominance is retained in the new, modified form which is carried out by the native bourgeoisie. This form of material base naturally gives rise to the ideological dominance of the elite as the ruling class. So as a realist post independent Indian novel, *The God of Small Things* in fact mirrors this dominance and also articulates the resistance to such domination.

In his famous essay “German Ideology,” Marx has pointed out that “The ruling ideas are nothing more than the ideal expression of the material relationships, the dominant material relationships grasped as ideas” (47). What Marx indicates is that the class that dominates as the ruling class dominates ideologically as well. In other words, the dominance in the base is mirrored in the superstructure, too. The ideas and beliefs of the ruling class become the ideas and beliefs of the whole society, thus blurring the contradictory relation and giving a false sense of unity and sharing between the oppressor and the oppressed.

In this chapter, I show how false consciousness, as the ideology of the dominant oppressing class, is represented in *The God of Small Things* through characters' actions and beliefs and symbols. I attempt to show how it functions to consolidate the unjust socio-economic order and how the oppressed internalise and deluded by it. My point is that the subscription to dominant ideology is false particularly to them because it functions against their class interest.

The term false consciousness is coined by Fredrick Engels, the co-propounder of communism. According to him, "ideology is a process of false consciousness because the real motives impelling the agent remain unknown to him, otherwise it would not be ideological at all" (qtd in Eagleton 89). Engels has equated ideology with false consciousness and false consciousness with unconsciousness because the agent never knows the motives behind his or her actions irrespective of the class. So for him false consciousness as only ideology is all pervasive. Terry Eagleton has explained the concept of ideology in its multiplicity of meanings and functions in social practices. He defines the function of the dominant ideology this way:

A dominant power may legitimate itself by *promoting* beliefs and values congenial to it, *naturalizing* and *universalizing* such beliefs so as to render them self-evident and apparently inevitable; *denigrating* ideas which might challenge it; *excluding* rival forms of thought, perhaps by some unspoken bit systematic logic; and *obscuring* social reality in ways convenient to itself. Such 'mystification,' as it is commonly known, frequently takes the form of masking or suppressing social conflicts, from which arises the conception of ideology as an imaginary resolution of real contradiction.(6)

Eagleton states that a dominant ideology at least has three functions: the dominant power or the oppressing class takes its ideology as only plausible legitimate ideology. Secondly, it universalizes its ideology as the ideology of the common belief of the whole mankind devoid of class nature. Thirdly, on the basis of the above two it obscures the reality and excludes and denigrates the rival ideology. In other words the dominant ideology does not look like ideology whereas the oppositional one does. This way status quo is maintained in favour of the oppressing class. We can see this functioning in society. A bourgeois state apparatus pacifies the oppressed mass not only by means of violence but, more efficiently, by inculcating in them the belief that the existing belief system is the only plausible belief system. Suppression of any form of opposition or rebellion of the working class is the secondary choice when there is crisis in the dominant ideology. Some workers find themselves to be satisfied with the existing social order because their internalization of the dominant ideology prevents them from understanding the true nature of the social relationship and consequently, being rebellious. A capitalist spontaneously thinks that the basis of equality between he and the workers is that they are his slaves and he can do anything to them because he has paid them. The workers, in general, accept this claim because they do not have the knowledge of the deceptive property relation in which their accumulated labour is the source of the accumulated capital. A male chauvinist might really think that women are commodities. Like any other commodities he can possess, use and them. Women too, under the delusion of this belief, think on the same plain and accept the given social position. The same applies to the question of 'touchability' or 'untouchability'. Hindu belief system teaches its adherents not to touch Dalits. The Dalits who have internalised the ideology of untouchability will feel satisfied with the 'untouchable' position given to them by the society.

Roy's *The God of Small Things* abounds in its depiction of such ideologies of the repressors and the repressed following them. Among many of such instances the pickle factory and relationships among the characters that move around it run by the Ipe family stand out. The name of the first chapter derived from it. Originally, it was started by Mammachi. "It was a small but profitable enterprise. She just ran it like a large kitchen" (47). As Chacko returned from England, this home craft of the mother changed. He got it registered, invested in machines and made her "the sleeping partner" (57). In fact, he did everything to transform her home craft into an expanded modern enterprise. It was christened as "Paradise Pickles and Preserves" and printed labels tagged to the products. The pickle bottles have been leaking since the beginning (167). He uses Bharat bottle sealing machine to stop the leak (248). That also does not work. But immediately after that, it is narrated, the financial slide began. Chacko mortgaged the family's rice fields to get bank loans which, instead of helping improve the situation, worsened the financial position. Finally it was banned by the F P O (Food Products Organization) because "according to their specifications it was neither jam nor jelly" (30). Although Ammu, Chacko's sister, did much work in the factory, her contribution is neither recognized as contribution nor does she get any legitimate proprietorship only because as a married daughter, she has no claim to the property. Chacko claims everything as his own. This is exploitation and discrimination on the basis of gender. Ammu ironically remarks that this is the result of "wonderful male chauvinist society" (57).

A few things become manifest from the pickle factory episode: one it shows how deeply Chacko, the Oxford educated self-styled Marxist, is guided by the traditional patriarchal ideology. It shows how the formal political sloganeering is one thing and to translate the professed ideology into a guiding principle of one's practical

life is quite the other. Chacko is not only a male chauvinist, but he is a bourgeoisie in the true sense of the word, because he is the owner of modern factory and he is on the way to make it a much a bigger enterprise. The relationship between him and the other members, including the women workers whom he exploits sexually, is that of the capital and the labour. In this regard he represents the Indian nationalist bourgeoisie who called on the women and the other marginalized groups with a lot of alluring promises while they had to fight the British Empire but betrayed them as India got independence. Mullany interprets the leakage of the pickle bottles as “the failure of the post-independence generation to ‘preserve’ the economic vision of a self-sufficient India cherished by the leaders of the anti-colonial nationalist movement, M. K. Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru” (qtd in Tickell 47). Chacko takes over the proprietorship of the pickle factory from his mother and leaves her in passive and economically dependent position although the factory was originally started by her. This is a kind of betrayal and usurpation which represents the betrayal and marginalisation of women and working class people by the ruling class that succeeded the British rule. At the same time the machine that is used to fix the leakage derives its name from the country (Bharat) itself. This stands for the nationalist attempt of the ruling class to find a native solution to its economic problems. Secondly, Roy’s views on gender issues and her distrust in centralised and large scale production by the use of sophisticated technology have become manifest in the subsequent failure of the enterprise. The financial bankruptcy of the pickle factory symbolises the failure of this mode of production. According to her this form of enterprise engenders exploitative relationship between those who make decisions and those who have to carry out them. To quote her:

I am a critic of corporate globalization because it has increased the distance between the people who take decisions and the people who have to suffer those decisions. Earlier, for a person in a village in Kerala, his or her life was being decided maybe in Trivandrum or, eventually, in Delhi. Now it could be in The Hague or in Washington, by people who know little or nothing of the consequences their decisions could have. (*Shape 57*)

Her remarks show that Roy is not against globalisation as such, but she is against corporate globalisation only because in such globalisation people are disadvantaged and powerless. In the present form of globalisation, handful of imperialists and the capitalists take decisions in their favour and working class people have to carry out those decisions and suffer. Her solution to this problem is “Decentralization and the devolving of power to local groups” (*Shape 80*).

Roy indicates that decentralisation and localisation of power and women’s equal, active participation are very important because such participation allows the people at the grass root level to have their say in the decision making process, reduces the chances of domination by the people at the highest level and empowers those who have to carry out the decisions. Roy seems to argue through the pickle factory episode that introducing an advanced technology to boost up the production makes women passive agency and the corporate project is bound to failure. This means that the root cause of domination, exploitation and exclusion does not lie in the person who exercises it, but in the mechanism of centralization itself. Certainly, the pickle factory is not a corporate global project. But it exhibits the type of centralization that Roy objects to. We have Chacko as the sole owner and the decision maker. Other members, even the original owner Mammachi, who is reduced to a

sleeping partner, cannot have their say. Another point is that the factory has already taken the global trajectory because by transforming a local home-based industry into a nation-based mechanized production, he has moved it to much wider national market, thus paving the way to become a global enterprise. This way the bourgeois form of dominance is portrayed in relationship among human agencies in the pickle factory.

Chacko's use of power and influence for dominance in the factory has more than one dimension. His domain of hegemony is not confined to family and the pickle factory. It has political dimension as well because, besides being a factory owner, he is also "a self-proclaimed" and "an Oxford educated Marxist" (*God* 65). His relationship with the female workers and his political collaboration with comrade K. N. M. Pillai, a local leader of the Marxist Communist Party, have much wider importance. These require a separate discussion. However, an analysis of Papachi, another important character from the point of view of the representation of dominant class and its ideology, is in order.

Born as Shri Benaan John Ipe, he is mentioned as Papachi throughout the novel. He is the husband to Mamachi and father to Chacko and Ammu. He has been an Imperial Entomologist. After the Independence, his designation changed from Imperial Entomologist to "Joint Director, Entomology" (49). Thus, he occupies the ambivalent position of what Bhabha calls the mimic men who, in relation to the colonisers, act as '*almost the same but not quite*' (89). He bears British manners and attitudes despite the fact that he has suffered injustice from the Empire. So he stands for the colonial legacy in the post independent Indian society.

The greatest setback of his life is not having had the moth that he had discovered and named after him. Once he happened to see a moth which he noticed to be unusual .He took it to Delhi for further examination and confirmation. After six

months, it was identified as a sub species of a particular moth, not a separate species. However, after twelve years, it was officially confirmed that it was, in fact, a separate species. By then he had retired (49). The credit of discovery was given to some junior officer. The injustice he suffered under the Empire became the cause of his ill-humoured bullying temperament. Despite this, there does not appear any difference in his trust and admiration of the imperial culture and lifestyle. For example, when Ammu tells Papachi of Mr. Hollick's proposal to have sex with her and her husband's acceptance to it, Papachi cannot believe her because he believes that no Englishman covets another man's wife (*God* 42).

There are ample instances which show how his children deride him for being servile to the colonial culture. For Ammu, he is "an incurable British CCP, which was short form for *chi-chi poach* and in Hindi meant shit-wiper," (51). Chacko takes him to be "*Anglophile*" (52). His preferred lifestyle justifies to their claims. As an Indian official at the service of the Empire, he loves to admire and imitate the masters' life style no matter how imperfect that might be. He wears a well-pressed three-piece suit everyday (49). To show his attachment with the Empire, he has bought the sky blue Plymouth from an old Englishman. Here the second hand car symbolises the imperial legacy with which he proudly associates himself. He takes the car as a means to dominate the people around and bully his wife Mammachi, but ironically, it places him in isolation from the family members and also in the society, His attachment with the car and its implication is described in the satirical vein. To quote from the novel:

He bought the skyblue Plymouth from an old Englishman in Munnar. He became a familiar sight in Ayemenem, coasting importantly down the narrow road in his wide car, looking outwardly elegant but sweating freely inside his woollen suits. He wouldn't allow Mammachi

or anyone else in the family to use it, or even to sit in it. The Plymouth was Papachi's revenge. (48)

Here, in the extract, almost every phrase is suggestive of the imperial legacy and presents Papachi as someone as an imperial agent. The old Englishman from whom Papachi buys the car stands for the outgoing British Empire itself. The second hand sky blue Plymouth car which he buys from an Englishman symbolises the imperial legacy which, like Papachi, the Indian ruling class has proudly inherited and which it has used to enhance its prestige and dominate the oppressed people like Mammachi in the novel. To adopt a second hand car used by an Englishman as matter of pride is to become a mimic man, to use Bhabha's famous phrase. The fact that no one else is allowed to use it simply shows that the imperial cultural legacy is beyond the reach of the oppressed people. It is his way of showing superiority over the wife and the common people. In that sense the second hand car is his revenge. Later in another context, the car is depicted as the subject to encirclement and harassment by the angry demonstration of the protesting workers. This also points the ideological location of the car and its owners, first the old Englishman and Papachi later.

Papachi's bullying of his wife can be attributed to his colonial mindset. Obviously, he was trained as a colonial bureaucrat with feudal background and aspiration. In another context Mammachi is shown expressing her pride over her husband's family, which she claims, "used to own this whole hill" (168). This shows that Papachi's sadistic ethos is the product of the combination of the native feudal male chauvinism and the imperial legacy which manifest in his desired isolation in the family and his desire to control and possess Mammachi in the manner the British Empire colonised India.

The relationship between Papachi and his wife Mammachi is that of the dominant and the dominated. Both of them have accepted their positions without any question and uneasiness. Papachi thinks it his right and duty to torture his wife and Mammachi, who in turn, takes it as her destiny to be mistreated by him. There is no grumbling on her part. There are many instances of this kind of relationship between them. He is said to have been seventeen years older than her and his being much older irritates him greatly (47). To marry a much younger wife, in Hindu culture, is regarded not only permissible but also desirable. Women are taken as mere instruments for the continuation of clan and their chastity is very much crucial. Early wifehood is supposed to keep women's chastity intact. We have a Hindu myth in which Shiva Sharma, a seventy year old Brahmin, marries seven year old Goma and produces children. This kind of asymmetrical relation is certainly oppressive to women but the assimilation within this culture prevents them from seeing it. In case of the novel, it is irritating for Papachi to notice that he was an old man when wife was still in her prime (47). The realization of the vast age gap makes him jealous. According to the narrator, he has always been a jealous man and resents the attention his wife is getting (47). His jealousy turns into physical violence on her. The narrator relates that "every night he beat her with a brass vase. The beatings weren't new. What was new was only the frequency with which they took place. One night Papachi broke the bow of Mammachi's violin and threw it in the river" (48). The Papachi-Mammachi relationship indicates the traditional domination of women by men which has continued even in the free India. It also indicates the prevalence of gender violence in the post independent India because the imperial legacy continues to this day.

Papachi cannot see his wife making progress. If she gets chances to show her talent, he thinks that she might support herself and go out of his control. Once they spent a few months in Vienna. There Mammachi took violin lessons. The Swiss violin teacher recognized the exceptional talent in her and unfortunately praised it before her husband. This only aroused the jealousy in him and the lessons were discontinued (50).

This way Papachi bullies his wife. The tradition he is brought up and trained in has inspired his brutal treatment of his wife. His feudal background, his involvement in the colonial and later in the postcolonial state apparatus and internalisation of the Hindu patriarchal ideology contribute to his temperament. These factors make him exercise violence over his wife without any questions and doubts.

Another important character from the point of view of the representation of the ruling class ideology is Mr. Hollick. Although his role is brief and appears in the novel as a passing reference, he represents the strong imperial presence in the post independent India.

He appears as another episode of suffering in the already troubled married life of Ammu. Without knowing necessary details of her future husband, she had jumped into marriage under pressing situation. She was already eighteen and there was no marriage proposal. This made her desperate. All she wanted was to escape from Ayemenem, her parents' home (38, 39). Her husband worked as an assistant manager of a tea estate. He was a full-blown alcoholic (39). Ammu had twins but her husband's drinking habit worsened. His drunkenness and carelessness in the job resulted in a summon from Mr. Hollick, the English manager of the estate. Mr. Hollick frankly proposed to him for his wife, as only way to continuing the job (41). Her husband assented to the proposal without any hesitation, without any consultation

with her, taking her as his instrument for granted, but Ammu resisted fiercely. In addition to other things, Mr. Hollick's desire to exploit a married woman sexually discloses the imperial attitude to the colonized women generally and his immorality particularly. It also shows the submissive native patriarchy which oppresses women brutally at home but plays the role of the pimp for the foreign masters. This also shows how ultimately the women have to bear the brunt of colonialism. It shows that colonialism might have ended formally, but the domination remains in one or another form. It also shows how the oppressors of various types get combined against the marginalized groups.

Mr. Hollick's exploitation and domination of women is not an exceptional case. It is his general nature. It is as if he has got the privilege to use the tea picking female workers as play things. It is said that "there were a number of ragged, lightskinned children on the estate that Hollick had bequeathed on the tea-pickers whom he fancied" (42). Here the illegitimate 'light skinned' progeny that are forced upon the working class women by Mr. Hollick represents the postcolonial Indian ruling class and its ideology who, inheriting the colonial legacy, has lost the original native quality. Their interracial sexual encounter, often forced one, symbolises the post independent cultural hybridity which takes pride in being close, in complexion, tongue and manners, to the colonial masters. This is exactly what Macaulay has envisaged while he was justifying the introduction of English education in India.

The dominant ideology is most brutally imposed by the state power in its most tangible form. According to Althusser, any enquiry into ideology must begin from the realities of class struggle. He also stresses that the social classes exercise their power through 'the ideological state apparatuses' which includes, according to him, in addition to the state power, the institutions like school, family, media and the rest (

qtd in Eagleton 147). He also believes that when we say someone is guided by ideology, we mean that he /she is guided without realising it. It is an automatic or unconscious process. It happens like that because one is so much used to social practices and thoughts. The state is the most powerful agency which has to exercise its ideology in the most deceptive form. Its ideology serves the interests of the exploiting class but it presents itself as the ideology of all classes. In that the dominant ideology is not taken to be ideology at all. It is just like to say that if a rich man beats his worker, it is normal, it is not beating. So it is not ideological. But if the latter beats the former, it is beating and also a big crime. If one attempts to defend the worker's beating, it is ideological. The state apparatuses normalise ideology that way. The state also monopolises violence over the dominated class as a natural, legal or logical means. This means that when the state power takes violent actions over its opponents, it is not violence and, as a rule, goes unnoticed.

Explaining Antonio Gramsci's notion hegemony, Roger Simon states that a class and its representative exercise its power over subordinate class by means of a combination of coercion and consent (24). The naked use of force prevents the ideology from being deceptive and illusive to the masses. It is, paradoxically, a sign of weakness not of strength. In Roy's *The God of Small Things*, the state power is presented in its brutal and naked form through the Kottayam police station and most especially its inspector Thomas Mathew. The Anglicized name of the inspector strongly suggests the colonial repressive legacy in the independent Indian state machinery. Its hostility to Velutha and Ammu represents the hostility of the Indian ruling class towards the 'untouchable' and women who defy or resist the existing order in one way or the other. Velutha, the 'untouchable' carpenter, is

inhumanly killed by the police. His only crime is to make love with Ammu, a high class lady. Velutha is formally and falsely, accused of attempted rape of her. At the police station, she desires to make a statement regarding the case. The inspector's response is this way:

He stared at Ammu's breasts as he spoke. He said the police knew all they needed to know and that the Kottayam police didn't take statements from *veshyas* or their illegitimate children. . . Inspector Thomas Mathew came around his desk and approached Ammu with his baton.

“If I were you,” he said, “I would go home quietly.” Then he tapped her breasts with his baton. Gently. *Tap tap*. As though he was choosing mangoes from a basket .Pointing out the ones that he wanted packed and delivered. (8)

The police force is supposed to protect people who suffer injustice. But under corrupt state machinery which has inherited colonial legacy, it is merely an instrument of oppression and violence over the marginalised class, caste and gender and this is a routine behaviour. Thomas Mathew's humiliation of Ammu in the police station proves this. First of all he harasses her by advising her to go home. Then he calls her a *veshya*, a whore, and refuses to accept her statement. His humiliation of her reaches the climax when he hits her breasts with his baton which symbolises the state authority itself. To him, Ammu's breasts are like mangoes from a basket which are sold, bought and consumed. Mangoes are seasonal fruits placed in the market to be selected or discarded by consumers. His treatment of her shows that to him women are not human beings, but they are things and he can do anything to them. His attitude to Ammu represents the attitude of the Indian state power to women in general. His

behaviour realistically represents the behaviour of the Indian security forces which take the violence on women and resisting groups as their privilege. We have the instances of rape of a great number of women in Chhatisghad, Andra, Jammu and Kashmir by them and shooting of defenceless people in the name of fake encounter in the way Velutha is killed by the Kerala police.

Another important symbol that stands for the dominant order is the History House. In fact, through the persistent repetitions, its image is given prominence. Besides, a whole chapter is devoted to the description of the History House. Important events like the transgressive love making between Ammu and Velutha and Velutha's arrest and beating by the Kottayam police take place beside the house. Susan Comfort correctly defines the house as "the epicenter of this nexus of ideology and violence" (8). It is described as the house "Whose doors are locked and windows open" (306). The locked doors and open windows indicate its exclusive nature. This means that there is no easy access to legal redress for those who are on the margin. If they desire entry, they have to use the windows. This means that only violent or illegal means are left for them. It is white-walled and red roofed (306). The detailed description runs like this:

A deep veranda ran all around. The rooms themselves were recessed, buried in shadow. The tiled roof swept down like sides of an immense, upside-down boat. Rotting beams supported on once-white pillars had buckled at the centre, leaving a yawning, gaping hole. A History hole. A History shaped hole in the Universe through, at twilight, dense clouds of silent bats billowed like factory and drifted into the night.

(307)

The description clearly indicates that the history house stands for postcolonial India and the dominant, Indian ruling class ideology which has a long existence and retained its oppressive quality despite the changes in rulers through times. Susan Comfort identifies Kari Saipu, the owner of the house, with Kurtz of *Heart of Darkness* and the transactions associated with/around it as the political economy of imperialism based on violence and inequality (8). Since this unequal relation still remains today, the house symbolises the postcolonial India and the dominant order. The closed doors indicate the exclusive character of the house, letting only the dominant class in. For those excluded and marginalised, they can have an entry into it by using force or illegal means through the windows. That is why there is transgression and violence. This is what Comfort exactly means when she asserts that it is the epicentre of ideology and violence. ‘The rotting beams’ of the house indicates both its long history and out-datedness. So, as the image of rottenness indicates, its replacement by some new house has become imperative because it has lost strength, relevance and utility. So it anticipates impending resistance and change. ‘Once- white pillars’ implies the imperial component in the formation of tradition represented by the house because the repressive post independent Indian state is founded on the British legacy. Even the Indian rulers proudly announce this. “Manmohan Singh thanked British imperialism for everything India is today” (*Shape* 176). The frequent references to Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* and the character Kurtz fix the colonial implication of the History House. Kari Saipu, its owner, has been identified as “the Black Sahib. The Englishman who had ‘gone native.’ Ayamenem’s own Kurtz” (52).

Kari Saipu is the owner of the rubber plantation that lies around the house. The plantation economy is a means and end of colonial exploitation and domination. Saipu being nativized Englishman His presence indicates that the History House

stands for the Empire that is still influential even long after the independence. To cite Comfort, once again, the house is “associated with a political economy of imperialism” (8). So we can assert that the colonial power and its ideology are strongly presented through the elaborate and compact image of the History House.

The God of Small Things also abounds in its depiction of the late neo-liberal, globalised capitalist ideology and its effects on the course of actions and the characters. Here the novel is an outright critique of the present form globalisation in which only the handful of the elite population gets benefits by forcing the largest section of the population into destitute and deprivation. Roy has been a fierce critique of it and an advocate of the notion of globalising dissent or resistance. In this sense the novel corresponds to the ideas that Roy has articulated in her polemical non-fictional prose works. In a conversation with David Barsamian, she mentions “the connections between the dispossession and the despair created by corporate globalisation” in India (*Shape* 121). In the same conversation she elaborates her attitude to globalisation this way:

Once you understand the process of corporate globalisation, you have to see that what happened in Argentina, the devastation of Argentina by the IMF, is part of the same machine that is destroying Iraq. Both are efforts to break open and to control markets. And so Argentina is destroyed by the chequebook and Iraq is destroyed by the cruise missile. If the chequebook won't work, the cruise missile will. Hell hath no fury like a market scorned. (*Shape* 134)

Her critique of globalisation is unequivocal. In her opinion, the present form of globalisation is not simply a globalisation as generally floored and taken, but the fact that it is corporate greed which is usually ignored. She holds the view that

globalisation means economic plunder and naked form of armed occupation of the less developed countries like Argentina and Iraq by the new imperial financial institutions like the IMF and the only super power, the US. She brings forth the new imagery of the chequebook and cruise missile which implies the techniques employed by American imperialism in place of the worn out imagery of stick and carrot, the technique used by its predecessor British imperialism. She means that the present form of globalisation is in no way equitable or democratic, but it is brutal and a new form of domination based on consensual or coercive measures. Those who readily submit are dealt with financial aid and those who do not are severely punished with missiles. The plunder of Argentina illustrates the former and Iraq the latter. In this way Roy equates globalisation with Americanisation and neo-colonisation.

In the same book she has expressed her opinion on privatisation which is the key point of the neo-liberal economy. According to her, “privatisation is the antithesis of democracy. It is the process of transferring public assets, held in trust for public good, to private companies to amass private profit. It is simply unacceptable” (*Shape* 169).

In the novel, the global political economy is presented in various places. For example, Estha, one of the twin children of Ammu, has been re-returned by his alcoholic father to Ayemenem and he has lonely walks along the banks of the river where he observes the smell of “shit and pesticides bought with World Bank loans. Most of the fish had died. The ones that survived suffered from fin-rot and had broken out in boils” (13).

Here Roy’s critique of the neo- imperial policy has found expression through the perspective of Estha. The World Bank has been presented as the agency of death, disease and decay, not as an elixir of progress as the advocates of neo-liberal

economic policy claim. Furthermore, the images themselves are traumatic to the observer as well the reader, as reminder of the suffering caused by the neo-colonial agency.

Globalisation, privatization, liberalisation, free market, trans-border mobility of finance, idea, technology and people are the highly appreciative catchwords of current academic discourse. They are so if we look at them from the perspective of the corporate group because they get benefit from these policies. But Roy looks into these topics from the point of view of the sufferers, not from the perspective of those who benefit. Again the novel uses Estha's lonely observation to comment on the other side of globalisation:

Other days he walked down the road. Past the new, freshly baked, iced, Gulf- money houses built by nurses, masons, wire-benders and bank clerks who worked hard and unhappily in faraway places. Past the resentful older houses tinged green with envy, cowering in their private driveways among their private rubber trees. Each a tottering fiefdom with an epic of its own. (13)

What interests the reader is the pain Roy has taken in enlisting the class of the low paid but hard working individuals in contrast to the outward splendour of the newly built houses with the unhappiness and miseries of the workers who work hard in the faraway places but whose stories go untold. By doing this, Roy is simply showing the other side of the consequences that the prevalent form of global economy has brought about. The discourse of globalisation draws our attention to the fact how the world has been changed into a small village and faraway people have been brought together. But *The God of Small Things* shows quite the contrary. It shows how it has fragmented and separated families in the pursuit of fulfilment of somehow necessary

yet vain and showy needs which the late capitalism has imposed even on the working class people. Regarding this painful situation she opines that:

I am a critique of corporate globalisation because it has increased the distance between the people who take the decisions and the people who have to suffer those decisions. Earlier, a person in a village in Kerala, his or her life being decided maybe in Trivandrum or, eventually, in Delhi. Now it could be in the Hague or in Washington, by people who know little or nothing of the consequences their decisions could have. (*Shape* 79)

The distance is great but the consequences are real and painful.

The installation of the dish antenna and satellite TV in the drawing room of the Ayemenem house (27- 28) definitely marks the intervention of the global or the American culture because in her works Roy equates globalisation with Americanisation (*Shape* 79). The presence of cable TV not only has a symbolic value. More than this, it impacts the viewers, especially, Baby Kochamma and Kochu Maria, and their behaviours and attitudes to other characters. This is not the place to discuss these two. They deserve a separate and detailed analysis, for they represent a different tendency. Right here is the place to see how the globalised culture has been projected as an ideological tool to poison the minds of the characters in the novel.

According to Althusser, class hegemony is not achieved only through repressive state apparatuses but primarily through ideological state apparatuses like education, mass media, family or church. He opines that no class can prolong its hold without using these mechanisms (qtd in Malesevic and Mackenzie 88). Althusser believes that repressive mechanism is less effective to maintain power for the dominant class than the ideological apparatuses. Here he defines the role of the mass

media as an ideological tool. We can see the same role of TV in *The God of Small Things*. We find it functioning as a tool of inculcating oppressive values in the viewer.

Before examining the ideological function of the cable TV, it is good to confirm this with Roy's views. In her famous polemic essay "Breaking the News" she has conflated TV with state terrorism. According to her the mass media, particularly television journalists, can be counted as perfect collaborators of the state (*Listening* 87). Like the need of alternative form of globalisation she believes in the alternative media to inform the public of the reality. In an interview she opines:

The language of the Left must be accessible, must reach more people.

We must acknowledge that if we don't reach people, it's our failure.

Every success of Fox News is a failure for us. Every success of major corporate propaganda is our failure. It's not enough to moan about it.

We have to do something about it. Reach ordinary people, break the stronghold of mainstream propaganda. (*Shape* 129)

Here Roy is highlighting the need of alternative media which can break the monopoly of the so called mainstream propaganda. The American Fox News is an example of the dominant media which is a collaborator of the neo- imperial project. Her opinions completely apply to the role the cable TV plays in the novel. Let us see how it is presented and what role it plays.

Baby Kochamma and Kochu Maria are the consumers of global media network programs. Neglecting gardening, her earlier hobby, Kochamma has become a TV addict. If we take her fondness for gardening as her interest in the things local, then we can say that global TV culture is what makes her abandon it, an inevitable result. Actually, "she presided over the World in her drawing room on satellite. . . Blonde, wars, famines, football, sex, music, coups d'état- they all arrived on the same

train. They all arrived together” (27). In the same fashion Kochu Maria “enjoyed the WWF *Wrestling Mania* shows where Hulk Hogan and Mr. Perfect . . . beat each other up brutally (28).

These two characters not only watch TV programmes with enthusiasm, but they are also influenced and guided by it. They dye their hairs and take part in the contests offered by them. They have a T-shirt and a Thermos flask. This way they are greatly affected by consumerism offered by the TV programmes. They adopt the globalised American values without being Americans. This makes them, particularly Baby Kochamma, share the American fear and hatred of communism and hatred of working class. Let us see:

She was frightened by the BBC famines and Television wars that she encountered while she channel surfed. Her old fears of the Revolution and the Marxist-Leninist menace had been rekindled by new television worries about the growing numbers of desperate and dispossessed people. She viewed ethnic cleansing famine and genocide as direct threat to her furniture.

She kept her doors and windows locked, unless she was using them. She used her windows for specific purposes. For a Breath of Fresh Air. To Pay for the Milk. To Let Out a Trapped Wasp (which Kochu Maria was made to chase around the house with a towel). (28)

Baby Kochamma’s fear of famines, of wars, of revolution, of communism and the fear of the growing number of poor people certainly has concrete basis. But as the narrator explicitly points out, it is media created. For example it is not famine in the usual sense of the word by which Kochamma is frightened but it is by “the BBC famine.”In the same way the other fear factors are also mainly media created despite

the fact that they have certainly real existence. She is reported to have learned “the smart, snappy language of television commercials and lied about her age” (297). Thus as a result of media manipulation, she lives in the affected and artificial world. Had not been they so much TV addicted, their perception of the world would have been different. If we take Roy’s total distrust of the corporate media into consideration, we have to accept that the media present a distorted picture of the reality. They misinform and manipulate the mass. They magnify what is trivial and trivialise what is significant to suit the interests of the corporate group. This is what Althusser means when he takes media as one of the ideological apparatuses. The characters like Baby Kochamma and Kochu Maria have consumed and internalised the falsities offered to them by cable TV.

Althusser claims that church or religion is one of the ideological state apparatuses. He means that religion also functions as an ideological tool to mislead the working class mass. It promises a heaven for the oppressed after the death while the oppressors enjoy it in this life. So it is also a delusive for the toiling masses. For this reason Marx has called religion an opiate and he is absolutely right. *The God of Small Things* presents religions, especially Christianity in this light. However, this does not mean that the novel favours Hinduism. But the opposite is correct. Hinduism is responsible for the inhuman caste system in India. Christianity came into India as an emancipatory project. In this sense it deserves more attention than any religious project. Christianity is shown empowering the already powerful class and for the so called untouchables it offered an empty promise. The novel outlines the role of Christianity as follows:

When the British came to Malabar, a number of Paravans, Pelayas and Pulayas (among them Velutha’s grandfather, Kelan) converted to

Christianity and joined the Anglican Church to escape the scourge of Untouchability. As added incentive they were given a little food and money. They were known as the Rice-Christians. It didn't take them long to realize that they had jumped from the frying pan into the fire. They were made to have separate churches, with separate services, and separate priests . . . It was a little like having to sweep away your footprints without a broom. Or worse, not being *allowed* to leave footprints at all. (74)

The advent of Christianity in India is closely linked with imperial project. It was used as one of the means of civilizing the Indians and used as a pretext to prepare the ground for commerce and politics and to pacify the masses that could resist the colonisers. It is famously said the Bible was followed by business and then bandook in the process of India's colonisation. Despite its promise of the equality of humanity, it created further insulting situation in multiple ways. It continued and intensified the caste system. The promise broke. Under Hinduism the Untouchables had to wipe out their footprints on the path. At least they had identity. After conversion, they still remained the Untouchables. Furthermore, they were stigmatised as Rice Christians (*God 74*). In this way Christianity and Hinduism both remained oppressive.

In this way, Roy's *The God of Small Things*, images and symbols like the pickle factory, the Plymouth car, the History House, the institutions like the Kottayam Police, the World Bank and the cable television, religious institutions and the characters like Papachi, Chacko, and others, represent the dominant class and its ideology as practised by the dominant class.

Originally, false consciousness is the only form of dominant ideology. *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy* defines false consciousness as "(1) lack of clear

awareness of the source and significance one's beliefs and attitudes concerning society, religion, or values; (2) objectionable forms of ignorance and false belief . . . workers who are unaware of alienation" (304). Raymond Geuss defines the term from the functional point of view. According to him false consciousness functions for the maintenance of an oppressive power, and that those who hold them are ignorant of this fact (qtd in Eagleton 24-25). For Althusser ideology in the main alludes to the affective, unconscious relations with the world, to the ways in which we are pre-reflectively bound up in social reality (qtd in Eagleton 18).

One of the definitions of false consciousness is that it operates in the oppressed class and makes them ignorant of the dominance of the oppressor. Mark Haugaard stresses that "the social subject is considered to have internalised knowledge which distorts its perception of reality in a way which is a dominant elite-the bourgeoisie in Marxism. It is because the dominated internalise the ideology that they willingly participate in the reproduction of structural forms which are contrary to their actual interests" (qtd in Eagleton 157).

The above definitions though sound different, stress on the common nature of ideology. All agree that it is false; it keeps the agent in ignorance; it is unconsciousness and it is oppressive. It is so because it does not allow the agent to realise the exploitative social relations. When an oppressed subject does not see that change is possible in his/her favour, he/she will continue to follow the oppressed world view. It is so because false consciousness naturalises and neutralises the exploitation of labour by capital. Unconsciously, the subject internalises the belief that exploitation is not exploitation but it is the way the things should be. Ideology in the form of false consciousness functions to maintain and consolidate the existing unjust socio-economic order. It naturalises alienation of capital from labour. The

oppressed subject looks at the world with the oppressor's eye. What an agent learns from social institutions, or to use Althusser's words the ideological state apparatuses, is ideology as false consciousness (qtd in Eagleton 18). For example- the zamindars did not create the land they hold as their private property. They did not clear the forests to make the land cultivable. Certainly, the poor people did everything. Despite this truth, both the poor and the landholders share the same false belief that the lands belong to the holders not to those who really laboured. In this sense ideology is deceptive and also unifying in favour of the propertied class. By suppressing the facts, ideology homogenises the people of differing class, caste and gender.

Although false to both of the conflicting classes, false consciousness implies different meanings to them. False consciousness is not false to the exploiting class in the sense it is to the oppressed because it serves the class interest of the former and functions against the interest of the latter. That is why ideological state apparatuses like the state power, the media, religion, schools and non-governmental agencies use their whole energy to disseminate false consciousness as consciousness. But there is one positive point in the notion of false consciousness. We can infer that if there is false consciousness, there can be correct consciousness which can help the agent to see through the exploitative social reality.

I intend to discuss the characters like Baby Kochamma, Mammachi, Kochu Maria and Vellya Paapen as the agency of false consciousness. My point is that these characters belong to the oppressed class/caste/gender but adopt oppressor's viewpoint. To different degrees, they suffer injustice and oppression. For justice and dignified living, they should be struggling in solidarity with other victims against the dominant order. But instead of doing that, they allow themselves to be deluded by the ideology of the oppressors, go against the resisting forces and become an instrument in favour

of the status quo. Here class/caste/gender solidarity fails due to the ideology they have been influenced by.

Baby Kochamma is the unmarried aunt of Chacko and Ammu. Like Ammu, she is also a woman without a permanent place of her own because she also lives in the Ayamenem house which legally and conventionally belongs to Chacko. Due to both being in the margin, we see common ground between them for solidarity and cooperation. But Baby Kochamma becomes a bully and plays a decisive role in bringing about the death of Velutha and also to some extent of Ammu, too. She is jealous of Ammu's children- Rahel and Estha and cannot see them happy. She grudges them their moments of high happiness when a dragonfly they'd caught lifted a small stone off their palms with its legs, or when they had permission to bathe the pigs, or they found an egg- hot from a hen. But most of all, she grudged them the comfort they drew from each other. She expected from them some token unhappiness (46).

She becomes a tool of the police, the murderous mechanism of the state. I have discussed in some detail how she has been interpellated with the global consumer culture in the previous chapter in which I discussed the representation of the dominant ideology. Here I will discuss only her role as the bearer of the false consciousness.

Despite her desperate effort, she has failed to find father Mulligan as her husband. She becomes a Christian devotee in order to find chances to make love with him. So her religious devotion is hypocrisy. Her failure to secure a lover or a husband in Mulligan makes her cruel to the people who suffer. Instead of sharing woes with Ammu, she looks for opportunities to inflict pain upon the latter. As she knows about the Ammu-Velutha affair and its implication, she blooms because she sees it as God's

way of avenging her (Baby Kochamma) humiliation at the hands of Velutha and the men in the march (257). If we believe in freedom, Ammu has not committed any crime by having sex with Velutha. But Baby Kochamma is horrified by the mere imagination of the smell of the Paravan's body. She does not intend only to avenge Velutha but also Ammu because she harbours jealousy against her as well. It is her plan to accuse Velutha of attempted rape of Ammu (258). Actually, this false accusation paves the way for the brutal murder of Velutha by the police. She also plans to lock Ammu in the room. If we think of her social position, we tend to think that it was not necessary for her to go that far. But her way of thinking about class/caste/gender leads her to that direction and point.

This way Baby Kochamma, despite being a lifelong victim of patriarchal order, chooses to associate herself with the oppressive forces and brings about disaster for Velutha and Ammu, who represent the emergent forces. Mammachi is another example of the one who is under the delusion of false consciousness. I have outlined her submissive relation with her bullying husband. She is one of the worst victims of the patriarchal order. Yet, she has so deeply internalised patriarchal ideology that in most of the cases she looks more patriarchal than traditional males themselves. This is evident in her partiality between her son and daughter.

We find Chacko and Ammu in similar situations. Both are married but suffer from broken marriages. His wife Margaret has divorced him and so has Ammu. Both have married outside the community. Ammu married a Hindu and Margaret was a British girl. Both come back to Ayamenem. Both have extra-marital sexual affair and in both cases workers are involved. Chacko has sex with females who work in his pickle factory and Velutha with whom Ammu has sex is also a worker. Born of the same parents, Chacko is the master in the house but Ammu lives like a refugee.

Ammu approves Chacko's sex with the workers whereas she condemns Ammu's affair. Mammachi knows his relation with them. She knows that his relation with them is not the result of equal needs and desires. The working women are under financial compulsion. If they do not offer him sex, they might lose the job in the factory. This constant fear makes them surrender to him. Despite this, Mammachi facilitates the relation:

Mammachi had a separate entrance built for Chacko's room, which was at the eastern end of the house, so that the objects of his 'Needs' wouldn't have to go traipsing *through* the house. She secretly slipped them money to keep them happy. They took it because they needed it. They had young children and old parents. Or husbands who spent all their earnings in toddy bars. The arrangement suited Mammachi, because in her mind, a fee *clarified* things. Disjuncted sex from love. Needs from feelings. (169)

This shows how much deluded Mammachi is. As a woman who has suffered at the hands of a bullying husband, she should have known that property without independence does not make people happy. She also should have realised that sex without love is slavery through which she has undergone in her entire married life. Ironically, she has adopted the viewpoint of the oppressors as a compensation of her unhappiness. A much deeper irony lies in the fact that with her identification with the oppressors' viewpoint, she has internalised the viewpoint of males. She has forgotten the fact that she is a woman and women also have needs. The very Mammachi who approves and encourages her son's mercenary relation with oppressed women cannot stand the natural affair between her daughter and Velutha. Unlike Chacko's relation with female workers, Ammu-Velutha relation is founded on mutual need and love.

She never realises that if men have needs, so have women. She disapproves it on two counts: one is that as an unconscious woman she believes that women should not enjoy freedom and secondly, she strictly sticks to the caste system. The narrative further highlights her ethos this way:

Neither Mammachi nor Baby Kochamma saw any contradiction between Chacko's Marxist mind and feudal libido. They only worried about the Naxalites, who had been known to force men from Good Families to marry servant girls whom they had made pregnant. Of course they did not even remotely suspect that the missile, when it *was* fired, the one that would annihilate the Good Name for ever, would come from a completely unexpected quarter. (168)

Again these two women are deluded. Not to be able to see contradiction is to fall prey to false consciousness. It is to be satisfied with the things as they are. They are worried about the things they should not have been worried because as women they could have been raped and made pregnant. As women they should have felt at ease with the Naxalites at least so long as they protect women from abuse by males who take women as merely playthings. The Naxalites would have been subject of relief, not fear. They are so much guided by these hollow concepts like good families which run along the male lines. In this way, because of the false perception of the reality, because of the inability to see the unequal gender relations, Mammachi proves an unconscious tool of the patriarchy. Another point to note is that to Mammachi and Baby Kochamma, servant girls are not human beings, but objects with whom the males of the rich families can do anything they like. They are not worried so long as their family names are not tarnished. In Mammachi's giving money to the female workers for their compulsive sex with Chacko, the same kind of attitude has worked.

Roy remarks that “it is common practice for the unfortunate to vent their rage on the next most unfortunate, because the real adversaries are inaccessible, seemingly invincible and completely out of range” (*Listening* 20). Not to identify the causes of the grievances and problems of living means to be guided by what we call false consciousness. It dissuades the subjects from the belief that the desired change is possible and a unity of the subjects like themselves is necessary for this. This places them in confusion regarding what is right and what is wrong and consequently, makes them hit the wrong target. This applies to Mammachi and, more accurately, to Kochu Maria, who being a house maid, associates herself with the dominant group and enjoys bullying the characters who are miserable like herself.

Kochu Maria is the cook in the Ayamenem house. She is largely dependent on Baby Kochamma for her opinions and activities. She shares the hobby and habit of watching the cable television with the former (27- 28). They also share the envy of Ammu and her twin children Estha and Rahel. This extract illustrates this:

At night, Estha would stand on his bed with his sheet wrapped around him and say, “*Et tu Brute?* – Then fall Caesar!” and crash into bed without bending his knees, like a stabbed corpse. Kochu Maria, who slept on the floor on a mat, said that she would complain to Mammachi.

“Tell your mother to take you to your father’s house,’ she said. ‘There you can break as many beds as you like. These aren’t your beds. This isn’t *your* house.’

Estha would rise from the dead, stand on his bed and say, ‘*Et tu? Kochu Maria?*’- Then fall Estha!’ and die again. (83)

The implication of the allusion to Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* is highly suggestive. It indicates the betrayal from the close and unexpected one. Brutus, the closest associate of Caesar, turns against the latter and assassinates him. Here in the novel, Kochu Maria, an outsider and a servant in the house, occupies a more marginalised position than the twins. So it is natural for Estha to expect her not to side with Baby Kochamma who abuses them most. In this sense, her act is a betrayal or a renegeing. This means that Maria has taken the wrong side. The use of the verb 'would' indicates that her act of torturing Estha is repetitive, not incidental. This act is a part of her dealing with the ones who are in the margin like the twins.

While explaining the mode of domination under false consciousness, Eagleton says that a mode of domination is generally legitimated when those subjected to it come to judge their own behaviour by the criteria of their rulers (55). This situation absolutely applies to Vellya Paapen, Velutha's father. Being an 'untouchable' and poor, he is one of the most oppressed and exploited characters in the novel. But he adopts the viewpoints of the rulers or those who dominate to judge the category of caste and causes the worst damage in the course of the struggle waged by his own son. In fact he is the best example of how false consciousness misleads the oppressed against their own class interest and enhances the oppressive social order. In case of the characters like Mammachi, Baby Kochamma and Kochu Maria, though they are also oppressed to certain degree, they share common zones with the dominant class. For example- Mammachi is the wife of a feudal cum bureaucrat husband. Though oppressed by him, she herself exercises definite power over her subjects like the workers, even her daughter in law and the 'untouchables.' Similar things can be said about Baby Kochamma, who besides others, tortures Ammu and her children. In spite of being a cook, Kochu Maria also enjoys certain amount of privilege over

Ammu and her children particularly, because she associates herself with Baby Kochamma in her fondness for cable TV. Moreover, she is a touchable. So in this sense there are some points in their adopting the oppressors' point of view. But with Vellya Paapen the case is entirely different. He is oppressed through and through. He is a Paravan, so an 'untouchable.' He is also a proletariat in the true sense of the word. Despite this, he lets himself be guided by the old and reactionary ideology and goes against the interests of the oppressed. This way he serves a perfect example of false consciousness. What he exactly does is that he judges the activities of his son and Ammu by using the criteria of the rulers. The novel describes him as follows:

Velutha's father, Vellya Paapen, however, was an Old World Paravan. He had seen the Crawling Backward Days and his gratitude to Mammachi and her family for all that they had done for him, was wide and deep as river in spate. When he had his accident with the stone chip, Mammachi organized and paid for his glass eye. He hadn't worked off his debt yet, and though he knew he wasn't expected to, that he wouldn't ever be able to- he felt that his eye was not his own. His gratitude widened and his smile and bent his back. (76)

This account suffices to elucidate Vellya Paapen and his mentality. It also throws light on the condition of the 'untouchables' in the past. It explains that the Paravans had to crawl back to wipe out their footprints on the walk so that they do not defile the road the touchable might use. So he is used to such humiliating practices. Instead of raising the voice of disapproval, he loves to stick to such practices though they are not functional any more. The most important thing in the description is glass eye for which he feels a lifelong allegiance to Mammachi. His eye is not his own but it is given to him by Mammachi. It is described as "the mortgaged eye" (76). Thus,

metaphorically, his mortgaged eye stands for his subservient, mortgaged viewpoint which looks at the world as the oppressors do. It shows that Paapen does not see the world as an 'untouchable' should see but he sees as the touchables see. So we can say that he has adopted and deeply internalised the ideology of those who oppress him and people like him.

His appropriation of the suppressor's ideology can be best seen in conflict with his son and his loyalty to Mammachi. He cannot stand the love/sex relation between Ammu and his son Velutha. The sex between them is an act of transgression, an act of touching the untouchable. As Ahamad has rightly pointed out that the novel portrays the erotic as the real zone of rebellion and truth (107), his father's informing of it to Mammachi is act of betrayal. The father and son also collide regarding the latter's involvement in the feared Naxalite movement which, along with many radical programmes, aimed at putting an end to the caste system (qtd in Singh 41).

Velya Paapen fears from what is going on between Velutha and Ammu because he cannot see that the caste is a man made category and it can be resisted, challenged and ended. This is so because the dominant ideology has obfuscated his thought too much deeply. Because of this he informs Mammachi of the liaison. It seems that by it he is more hurt than the Ayamenem house itself is. Before Mammachi he offers to kill his son with his own hands (78). In fact he would have killed the son if he had found. The act if fulfilled by the police, though. If he had not informed Mammachi of it, Velutha could have survived because he is the only witness the relation. This way it shows that ideology one subscribes to places the agents in the role they perform. In other words, ideology is itself a class. Paapen's adoption of the touchable ideology places him against the resisting ideology. Commenting on this

type of inversion, Tiwary and Chandra remark that it is really the disempowered people who are helping in internalizing the power without use of external force (92).

In this way we see that the characters, belonging either to the mainstream or the margin, internalise false consciousness as their ideology and work to consolidate the status quo and as a consequently go against the emerging forces/ideology.

Chapter - III

Enlightened False Consciousness and *The God of Small Things*

I begin this chapter with an explanation of the term 'enlightened false consciousness' and examine its representation in Roy's non-fictional writing and then how it appears in the novel. In doing this I contend that it is also a variety of the dominant ideology because it encourages the agencies to serve the dominant order though they see through its deception and delusion.

One of the functions of the dominant ideology, according to Eagleton, is to legitimate dominant political power. He maintains that it does this by systematically distorting the reality (Eagleton 1). However, the dominant ideology is in no way a single category. It can operate in various forms to suit the need of the dominant class. One of such varieties is 'enlightened false consciousness,' the category proposed by Peter Sloterdijk. According to him, this form of ideology lives by false values but is ironically aware of doing so, and such an ideology can hardly be said to be mystified in the traditional sense of the term (qtd in Eagleton 27).

Enlightened false consciousness presumes that the dominant ideology, whether adopted by the dominant class or by the dominated, is deceptive and false. It helps strengthen the existing social and economic order. For example, it matters very little whether a bourgeois male chauvinist really believes it natural for him to buy women for his sexual pleasure or not because in either case he works to maintain the status quo because it is in his interest. In that sense, though false, for him this belief is not deception. But if beauties, for example, espouse this belief, this is certainly deception because they adopt the ideology which reduces them to slaves. As long as they are not aware of the exploitative relationship in buying and selling of women, they will enjoy a false sense of equality. But sometimes we have a somehow a middle

way category. A teacher, for example, might formally adopt the emergent or Marxist ideology because the teacher sees through the deception in the existing order and desires a change. But the teacher might fall back to the dominant ideology, for he/she finds the genuine application of Marxism difficult and it is not in her/ his interest. The teacher might continue to pretend to be a Marxist without implementing it or even going against. In other words, the teacher will play the role of an opportunist-- a Marxist in words but a capitalist in deeds. He/ she will do things which he/she thinks wrong according to the professed standards, with full consciousness. Ultimately, he/she will help preserve and consolidate the prevalent oppressive social order. This is exactly how we can explain the term 'enlightened false consciousness.'

In *The God of Small Things* three figures including K. N. M. Pillai, Chacko and E. M. S. Namboodiripad, and the Communist Party of India, to which these three belong, represent the enlightened false consciousness.

Though fictionalised, Namboodiripad is a historical person. He is the leader of the Marxist communist party and the first elected communist chief minister of Kerala. The other two are realistic characters. Their presentation in the novel has invited vehement criticism from Namboodiripad and Aijaj Ahamad. They strongly disagree to the way the novel has lampooned Namboodiripad. They opine that through the representation of the CPI and its members, Roy has shown her anti-communist bias and for this reason the novel lacks realism (Ahamad 103). The full fledged discussion draws the characters like Ammu and Velutha. I will be dealing with them in the next chapter. For now, I attempt to show two things: first, that by presenting the communists in the negative light, Roy is denouncing only one brand of communism, the parliamentarian communism, which has been co-opted into the mainstream political order. Second, that by doing so, she has not departed from

realism, but she has stuck to realism. The problem lies in the differences of ideologies Roy and Ahamad subscribe to.

In his famous article “Reading Arundhati Roy *Politically*,” published in *Frontline* Ahamad has criticised *The God of Small Things* on three counts: for lacking realism, putting her anti-communist ideology above realism and damaging the conflation of caste and sexuality. To quote him:

Her ideological opposition to communism is not in itself surprising; it is very much a sign of the times, in the sense that hostility toward the communist movement is now fairly common among the radical sections of the cosmopolitan intelligentsia, in India and abroad. The peculiarity is that, judging from the novel, she has neither *feel* for communist politics nor perhaps rudimentary knowledge of it . . . E. M. S. Namboodiripad, whom she merely lampoons, was first elected as Chief Minister of the state. This affective distance from the world of Communism cannot be because she lacks intelligence or imagination; of these she seems to have plenty for all else in the book. It is perhaps the settled ideological hostility which leads to an inherent incapacity to affectively imagine what she so passionately despises. (103)

Ahamad maintains that Roy’s ideology is anti-communist. She hates communism and that is why she cannot represent reality. But I fear Ahamad has not given sufficient consideration to the totality of the novel’s design while assessing its ideology. *The God of Small Things* does not have an anti-communist ideology and she is justified in her character portrayal of Chacko, Pillai and Pad himself. Through the negative portrayal the Marxist party and its members, whether real or fictional, Roy is critiquing only the variant of Marxism practised by Namboodiripad and his party

which, instead of struggling against, works within the existing order and weakens the people's struggle. This can be confirmed by referring to Roy's views and the views of the Indian Maoists' on the CPI and the CPI (M) which are parliamentary communists and whom Roy thinks to be no different from the other ruling parties. Roy admits that the ideology that is represented in *The God of Small Things* is her ideology. She does not see a great different between her fiction and her non-fiction (*Shape* 36). As a fierce critique of corporate globalisation and neo-liberal policy, she critiques not only the Indian rulers but also the Marxists who never question the status quo. She attacks Namboodiripad not because he is a Marxist leader but because his party does not question the existing order. She comments that his party "never questioned the traditional values of a caste-ridden, extremely traditional society. The Marxist worked from *within* the communal divides, never challenging them, never appearing not to" (*God* 66-67). These are the reasons why Roy is aggressive towards the Indian Marxists who are not different from the mainstream parties like Congress and Bharatiya Janata Party.

In her essays and interviews, Roy has reiterated her distrust in the parliamentary politics. She does not believe that competing in the periodic elections, winning them and forming governments within the existing socio-economic framework can make any effective difference in favour of the oppressed. In one place she argues that it does not matter who wins in such elections because the status quo essentially remains unchallenged (*Shape* 234). She elaborates her point:

Whatever they say during the elections or when they're in the opposition, no government at the state or centre, no political party right/left/centre/sideways has managed to stay the hand of neo-liberalism. There will be no radical change from 'within'.

Personally, I don't believe that entering the electoral fray is a path to alternative politics. . . I believe that strategically battles must be waged from positions of strength, not weakness. (*Shape* 234)

The reasons she gives behind her distrust in the electoral politics are obvious. She believes in the alternative politics which materialises only through radical means which challenge and resist the dominance of power for change (*Ordinary* 299). She argues that the practices of the mainstream parties have proved this. She does not see any difference among multi-coloured parties in so far as do not question the status quo. In fact, *The God of Small Things* is set in the post independent Kerala ruled by the Marxists like Namboodiripad. Despite this it is no different from other Indian states. In one of her essays she remarks:

There is an even greater irony: the Left Front, acting with the duplicity has become second nature to all parliamentary political parties, took a sharp turn to the right. Even while it criticized the government's economic policies at the Center, it tried to enforce similar ones on its home turf in West Bengal. It announced that it was going to build a chemical hub in the district of Nandigram, a manufacturing unit for the Tata Nano in Singur and a Jindal Steel plant in the forests of Lalgah in Purulia. (*Listening* xxvii)

She terms the political differences among all parliamentary parties "noisy familial squabbles" (*Listening* 146). From her remarks regarding the Indian left parties, it becomes clear that Roy criticises them not because that they are Marxists but because they are not genuine Marxists working for change. She opposes them because they are engaged in double dealings and also because they work for the companies like the Tata and Jindal. One point needs clarification here. Although Roy here refers to West

Bengal not Kerala, both of the states were at times ruled by the left front. She comments on the role of the Marxist party in Kerala in the novel as follows:

The real secret was that communism crept into Kerala insidiously. As a reformist movement that never overtly questioned the traditional values of a caste-ridden, extremely traditional community. The Marxists worked from *within* the communal divides, never challenging them, never appearing not to. They offered a cocktail revolution. A heady mix of Eastern Marxism and orthodox Hinduism, spiked with a shot of democracy. (*God* 66-67)

It is clear w that Roy's resentment lies in the Marxists' working within the racial divides and not challenging them, but only working with duplicity. In fact she is not alone to criticize the parliamentarian lefts. Many Marxist groups and organisations also have accused them of betraying the cause of the oppressed. The Naxalites, the radical, Indian Maoists whom Roy supports in her fiction and non-fiction, also share the same opinions. They criticize the CPI (M) for having betrayed the cause of Indian revolution and chosen the path of parliamentarianism and class-collaboration (qtd in Prakash Singh 22).

The term 'enlightened false consciousness' is best expressed in the Marxist party and its local leader, comrade K.N.M. Pillai. Pillai and his party office are pictured like this:

Sometimes Estha walked past the Lucky Press- old Comrade K. N. M. Pillai's printing press, once the Ayemenem office of the Communist Party, where midnight study meetings were held, and pamphlets with rousing lyrics of Marxist Party songs were printed and distributed. The

flag that fluttered on the roof had grown limp and old. *The red had bled away.* (emphasis added 13).

Here the metaphorical meaning of the image of the communist flag without red is self-evident. It implies that the Marxist party is no longer a Marxist party. Its existence lies in the past. The limp and old flag implies that that it has not been up to the needs and demands of the people. The most notable image is that of the communist flag without its red. Red is the sign of radicalism which, Roy intends to show, the party has abandoned. Although it looks casual, the press and its name also suggests the degeneration of the party and its cadres as a radical instrument because it is not a good sign for a responsible member of a party to be engaged in entrepreneurship which can transform the class status and ultimately the ideology itself. The word 'Lucky' as the name of the press betrays Pillai's hidden desire for wealth because in the bourgeois construct, luck is always associated with wealth which, as Marxism assumes, is the outcome of exploitation. As a member of a communist party, it is immoral to accumulate wealth through exploitation because it is the professed end of a communist party to fight and end exploitation. In another context Pillai is shown preaching revolutionary lessons to the workers. He incites them to be courageous and advance wave upon wave in the revolution and in protest against the local form of exploitation (120).

Comrade Pillai is an out-and-out careerist. His involvement in the Marxist party is not inspired by ideals of communism, but he is motivated by personal political ambitions. His chanting of Marxist/Maoist rhetoric is directed to get them fulfilled. The novel outlines his hypocrisy this way:

As an aspiring politician, it was essential for Comrade Pillai to be seen in his chosen constituency as a man of influence. He wanted to use

Chacko's visit to impress the local supplicants and Party Workers. . . Comrade Pillai was keen that they be *seen* waiting outside his house for their appointment with him. The more people that were seen waiting to meet him, the busier he would appear, the better the impression he would make. And if the waiting people saw that the factory Modalali himself had come to see him, on *his* turf, he knew it would give off all sorts of useful signals. (*God* 273)

The quote shows how Pillai attempts to use Chacko's business visit to his house to cash into political benefit. It also informs the reader that it is not an accidental case but an important component of the scheme of 'an aspiring politician,' a polite term for a careerist.

His double-dealings become manifest in his role to bring about the death of Velutha and subsequent encirclement of the pickle factory. As an organiser, he teaches the workers about their legal rights and the slogan of the unity of the workers all over the world (121). He also gives speeches about Rights of Untouchables and caste being class but he cannot stand Chacko favouring Velutha for his specific skills only because the latter is a Paravan, an untouchable (281). He proposes sending Velutha away from the factory. He reverts to the traditional Brahmanistic view and admits that he cannot the caste issue in favour of the untouchables. He also admits that he cannot convince his own wife to let the Paravans into the house (278). Even the Oxford-brand Marxist Chacko is surprised at this type of traditionalism in him. Even in his counterrevolutionary faith, Pillai is not honest. He is playing in the contradiction between the so called touchable and untouchable workers. At the same time he is blackmailing Chacko to pressurise to come under him (279).

The most unforgivable crime committed by Pillai is his role in the murder of Velutha by the Kottayam police. In fact, he is a collaborator in the plot. Sensing the impending danger that his relationship with Ammu could bring about, he goes to Pillai for guideline because the latter, as a leader, is his guardian. But to his dismay, Pillai declines to see him face to face. He does not listen to him any seriously. He simply evades his responsibility saying “‘But Comrade, you should know that the Party was not constituted to support workers’ indiscipline in their private life.’ ” (287). Instead of assuring him of investigation for protecting his rights, Pillai defines the cross-caste love as an disciplinary act. This shows he upholds castism. His irresponsibility to Velutha also has a political dimension. As a careerist he might have taken him as a potential rival. Anyway, if he had wanted, Velutha could have been saved because the latter would have acted cautiously and avoided the brutal murder by the police. The police would not have had audacity to kill him had Pillai backed him politically. But the uninevitable became inevitable due to the betrayal of the sham comrade. The authorial voice bitterly remarks “‘And there it was again. Another religion turned against itself. Another edifice constructed by the human mind, decimated by human nature’ ” (287). Roy is resenting the abuse of Marxism by its false adherents, not Marxism itself.

Velutha dies in the police custody. Inspector Thomas Mathew, the in-charge of the Kottayam police, is apprehensive of the consequences that can come about, especially, in case Velutha is a committed member of the Marxist party (121). The Inspector is affiliated to the Congress party. He knows that the case could take political turn if the Marxist party backed Velutha. That is why he acts cautiously. He consults Pillai who does not disclose the truth that Velutha is a party member. Despite knowing that it is a false charge, he does not defend Velutha before the Inspector.

Pillai leaves Velutha a defenceless prey to the police. This way Pillai betrays Velutha as well as Marxism. Commenting on the collaboration between Inspector Thomas Mathew and Pillai, Roy, in the form of the narrative commentary, remarks that “They were mechanics who serviced different parts of the same machine” (262). His motives and actions are qualitatively different from the motives and actions of other characters who are guided by false consciousness because they do really believe that whatever is, is true. They do not know that the alternative vision is possible. But in case of Pillai, he knows the falsities of his actions. In this sense he is guided by enlightened false consciousness. At the same time, this collaboration and Velutha’s death are also the metaphorical reminder of the police brutality and CPI’s role as collaborators against Naxalites who, like Velutha, were/ are killed in fake encounters.

Pillai’s double-dealings take the most outrageous turn when he dramatises the siege of the pickle factory to protest the death of Velutha:

It had been in the papers. The news of Sophie Mol’s death, of the police ‘Encounter’ with a Paravan charged with kidnapping and murder. Of the subsequent Communist Party siege of Paradise, Pickles& Preserves, led by Ayemenem’s own Crusader for justice and Spokesman of the Oppressed. Comrade K. N. M. Pillai claimed that the Management had implicated the Paravan in a false police case because he was an active member of the Communist Party. That they wanted to eliminate him for indulging in ‘Lawful Union Activities.’

(303)

Roy is ironical in her description. Pillai, who dramatises the protest, is in no sense a crusader for justice and a spokesman of the oppressed. But he is a murderer of justice in the guise of communism. At the same time she has not left the media as a

collaborating partner in spreading false rumour as facts in favour of the dominant class and its interests.

Comrade Namboodiripad, the leader of the Marxist party and the first elected communist chief-minister of the state of Kerala also makes substantial presence in the novel. Two things make him distinct: first, unlike Pillai he is a historical figure and secondly, he is not directly presented but indirectly referred to. Whatever is the case, he is also present as a Marxist leader who is not up to the Marxist principles and practices. In other words, he is also the one who is guided by the ideological category enlightened false consciousness which motivates him to profess high ideals but succumb to the status quo.

The God of Small Things presents Comrade E. M. S. Namboodiripad in a most satirical vein. He is pictured as “Kerala’s Mao Tse-tung” (126), “the flamboyant Brahmin high priest of Marxism”, and “Chief Minister of the first ever democratically elected communist government in the world” (67). He is also pictured as the propounder of the theory of peaceful transition to communism (67). His Kerala is the space where “Kurtz and Karl Marx joining palms to greet rich guests as they stepped off the boat” (126). The description goes still further:

Comrade Namboodiripad’s house functioned as the hotel’s dining room, where semi-suntanned tourists in bathing suits sipped tender coconut water (served in the shell), and old communists, who now worked as fawning bearers in colourful ethnic clothes, stooped slightly behind their trays of drinks.

In the evenings (for that regional flavour) the tourists were treated to truncated kathakali performances. . . . So ancient stories were

collapsed and amputated. Six-hour classics were slashed to twenty-minute cameos. (126-27)

So the communist leader is presented as an agent of corporate globalisation and the destroyer and distorter of ancient art. However, the most important thing about him is the state of Kerala itself where, under his rule, all sorts of brutality and oppressive activities continue unhindered. Despite all sorts of radical promises, the communist administration under Namboodiripad cannot bring any change worth mentioning. It was simply satisfied with working inside the traditional socio-economic framework. The state suppression of social movements, the caste problems and women's problems continued as in the colonial and pre-colonial days. These are the reasons why Roy, in her works, hits the comrades of the mainstream politics. The main point of her dissatisfaction with them is that they are not red enough as they should have been or as they are supposed to be.

The novel contains an elaborate description of the march of the workers demanding that the paddy workers, who were made to work in the field for eleven and half hours a day, be permitted to take a one-hour lunch break (69). The demand itself is ridiculous, especially when we take the fact into consideration that the state of Kerala has been ruled by the Marxists at least twice and the working hour all over the world is eight hours a day. The march cannot demand the legal right of the eight hour working day. It shows that the Marxist regime in the state has brought and can bring no change in feudal exploitation worth mentioning. That is why Roy, in her fiction as well as non-fictional works, sides with the radical politics of Naxalites. So, in this part of the novel, Roy intends to indicate the failure of parliamentarianism of the left politics. Understanding the triviality of the demand the mafia group like "Cardamom Kings, Coffee Counts and Rubber Barons –old boarding school buddies- came down

from their lonely, far-flung estates and sipped chilled beer at the Sailing Club. They raised their glasses. ‘*A rose by any other name . . .*’ they said, and sniggered . . .” (69). Here the elite are shown ridiculing the protest and its demand. They think that things are going to remain as it is. In this regard Roy opines that one cannot expect the parliamentary left any different so far as the question of genuine change is concerned (*Shape* 225).

Chacko is another character in the novel who carries out ‘enlightened false consciousness’. One important point sets him apart from Pillai and Namboodiripad. Chacko, unlike these, is not a public figure in the sense the latter are. So the magnitude of the damage he causes in the people’s resistance movement is certainly limited. He is not a card-holding member of the party. He has been converted early and has remained, through all its travails, a committed supporter (67). A committed supporter, we can assume, is ideologically devoted to the party and movement. So we can expect certain amount of progressive and justice-loving behaviour from him. We can expect him to support the interest of the working class. But does he fulfil these expectations?

Like his political allies, we find a lot of contradictions in his professed philosophy and his practices. Three instances stand out: his taking over of the proprietorship of the pickle factory from his mother, his denial to give Ammu any share in ownership of the factory despite her substantial contribution and his sexual exploitation of the female workers. These activities show that Chacko does not act as a progressive intellectual is expected to (by the way we should not forget that he is an Oxford-educated, self-proclaimed Marxist).

I have sufficiently thrown light regarding Chacko’s relationship with his mother regarding the ownership of the pickle factory. I think it is relevant to reassert

that by taking over the proprietorship of the factory, he has weakened the financial position of his mother in the family. It has also betrayed his retrogressive and patriarchal ethos.

After Ammu gets divorce from her alcoholic husband, she comes to Ayemenem for shelter. Like Chacko, she is also a child of Papachi and Mammachi. But in the parents' home she becomes helpless. She in fact becomes a refugee in her own homeland. Though she did as much work in the factory as Chacko, whenever he was dealing with food inspectors or sanitary engineers, he always referred to it as my factory, my pineapples, my pickles, my pickles. Legally, this was the case because Ammu as a daughter in parents' house has no claim to the property (57). This shows that Chacko does have the same kind of thinking of a possessive patriarch as the traditional male-centred society has bestowed upon him. He does not have Marxist sense of justice which always prioritises labour over capital. Even if he has the knowledge of Marxism, he does not apply it in practice.

His exploitation of female workers of his factory is most outrageous. It basically has two dimensions: sexual and economic. The novel highlights the former in the following way:

Chacko was a self-proclaimed Marxist. He would call pretty women who worked in the factory to his room, and on the pretext of lecturing them on labour rights and trade union law, flirt with them outrageously. He would call them Comrade, and insist that they call him Comrade back (which made them giggle). Much to their embarrassment and Mammachi's dismay, he forced them to stay with him and drink tea. (65)

His taking an advantage of the disadvantaged women is just diametrically opposed to Marxism which he has proclaimed to be his philosophy. If he was a genuine Marxist, he would respect these women and would not exploit sexually. That Marxism has become a pretext for abuse is evident. Ammu rightly comments his behaviour is all hogwash. It is an Oxford avatar of old zamindar mentality- a landlord forcing his attention on women who depend on him for their livelihood (65).

Whether Chacko is successful or not, by his profession, education and enterprise, he is a bourgeoisie in the true sense of the word because he is a factory owner and basically, his success lies in his ability to create and occupy markets and gaining profit. So his world view is basically decided by this fact. He is Oxford educated. So his adoption of Marxism must have prompted from academic interest, not Marxism as an ideological weapon of the resistance to injustice. His running of the pickle factory is a bourgeois enterprise because it employs workers and modern machine. In addition to exploiting women's labour power, he exploits them sexually. His factory is not running well. He shifts his financial burden on to the workers. To quote from the text:

Since things were not going well financially, the labour was paid less than the minimum rates specified by the trade union. Of course it was Chacko himself who pointed this out to them and promised that as soon as things picked up, their wages would be revised. He believed that they trusted him and knew that he had their best interests at heart.

(120)

His seemingly working class friendly promises work against the minimum interests of them. He is the owner of the factory. He knows that the workers are entitled to certain amount of wages whether he is in profit or in loss. He is not liable to distribute

the profit to the workers and by the same logic he cannot expect them to suffer at his loss. As a Marxist, he is supposed to know this. He also knows that it is exploitation if he does. Still, he does this by means of sentimentalism. He knows that his workers do not have other alternatives. They are compelled to work at any rate of wages. So this is exactly what enlightened false consciousness enables the agent to do.

In this way the Marxist party and the characters associated with it, including the historical figure Namboodiripad, are guided by enlightened false consciousness.

Chapter - IV

Representation of the Emergent Forces and their Ideology

In his famous essay “Theses on Feurbach” Marx states that the main point of philosophy is not to interpret the world but to change it (15). If the function of philosophy is to change the world, then we can assume that ideology and its function also can change. This means that instead of being deceptive and illusory, it can be liberatory, enlightening and scientific. It presupposes that ideology can also be a conscious tool, not always a false consciousness. It can resist the dominant mode of ideology and play an instrumental role to make the oppressed conscious of their exploitation so that they can change the world as Marx emphasises. So if an ideology is illuminative rather than illusive, liberatory than oppressive, it is emergent or resisting ideology. It equips the agencies with the sense that the world can be changed and an alternative world is not only desirable but also possible. Raymond Williams defines the term ‘emergent’ as new meanings and values, new practices, new relationships and kinds of relationship that are being created (123). According to him, emergent ideology places subjects, whether they are oppressors or oppressed, in new relationships. Emergent ideology begins as soon as the oppressed begin to realise that the dominance of the oppressors can/should be resisted. This means, in the radical sense, the oppressor finds it impossible to continue the oppression, at least in the old form, and the oppressed refuses to be dominated as usual. The emergent ideology, in the extreme case, attempts to dislodge the dominance of the oppressors and deploy its own alternative. Elucidating the function of emergent ideology he further says that “the formation of a new class, the coming to consciousness of a new class, and within this, in actual process, the (often uneven) emergence of a new cultural formation. Thus the emergence of the working class as a class . . . a new class is always the

source of emergent culture” (124). Williams conflates the emergence a new culture with the class conscious working class. In the same essay he indicates that the emergent culture is oppositional. In this sense the emergent ideology is resisting as well.

In fact the ideology of the class conscious proletariat was envisaged by Lenin. He has used the term ‘socialist ideology’ to refer to the category which coheres and inspires a specific group or class in the pursuit of political interests judged to be desirable (qtd in Eagleton 44). To quote his words:

Socialism, in so far it is the ideology of the proletarian class, undergoes the general conditions of birth, development and consolidation of any ideology, that is to say it is founded on all the material of human knowledge, it presupposes a high level of science, scientific work, etc. . . . In the class struggle of the proletariat which develops spontaneously, as an elemental force, on the basis of capitalist relations, socialism is introduced by the ideologists. (qtd in Williams 69)

Unlike Marx and Engels, Lenin is not conflating ideology with false consciousness. But he is referring to it as something liberatory for the oppressed. The main reason for this is that by Lenin’s time, Marxism has established itself as the ideology of the oppressed and it has offered them a vision of an alternative world. For him socialism, the ideology of the proletariat, is firmly founded on scientific knowledge of the world as it is. Unlike ideology as false consciousness, socialist ideology, according to Lenin, awakens the oppressed, posits them in the dynamics of class struggle because it is based on science.

Roy's *The God of Small Things* represents the emergent/resisting ideology through its characters symbols and political institution. It has brought the emergent class vis-a-vis the dominant class in conflict. Despite what Ahamad has commented regarding the ideology of the novel, I am contending that *The God of Small Things* is not an anti-communist novel. Rather, it only critiques and questions the parliamentary Lefts which have been co-opted into the oppressive Indian state machinery. As an activist Roy holds radical views regarding caste, class, gender, globalisation, the Maoist movement and big dam projects, ethnic and tribal issues. She has articulated her voices in her non-fiction like *The Algebra of Infinite Justice* , *An Ordinary Person's Guide to Empire* , *Listening to Grasshoppers* and *The Shape of the Beast* . The voices she has articulated in her non-fiction are the artistic rendering in *The God of Small Things*. At the same time she shares her ideological position with the Maoist. I do not mean to say that she is a Maoist and her ideological position is no different from the latter. I only mean to say that, despite differences, there are many overlapping zones between them. I will examine the zones and how her non-fictions converse with her fiction and how they match the Maoist ideology.

Before examining the pertinent issues and points related to emergent ideology, I think it necessary to foreground the fact that the story of the novel begins in the year 1967 which is also the year of the beginning of the Naxalite movement. It ends in 1991, the year India adopted neo-liberal economy. So the representation from as radical ideology as Maoism to as rightist a programme as neo-liberalism is not a coincidence. My point is that there are substantial amount of material background for the presence of radical ideology in the novel.

There are three places where the emergent/Maoist ideology has been represented. The Naxalite movement (which started in 1967) itself largely motivates

the protagonist and decides the course of actions and their outcome of the story. The point at which the working class protesters encircle Chacko's car and compel Baby Kochamma (who is inside it) to hold the communist flag and shout revolutionary slogans also meaningful from the point of view of politics of resistance. The major characters Velutha and Ammu represent Roy's radical ideology, and to a large extent both of them are guided or influenced by Maoist ideology that was in the atmosphere due to the Naxalite movement. In these three points of the novel the Maoist ideology, radical politics and Roy's ideology converse.

Roy's radical political views are articulated in her non-fictions. In one of her works she admits that she does not see a great difference between *The God of Small Things* and her non-fiction (*Shape* 36). She also states that she does not pretend to be a 'neutral' academic and adds that as a writer she has a point of view. She has feelings about the things she writes about and she expresses them (*Shape* 98). From her assertions two things become clear: one is that she articulates the same ideology whether it is *The God of Small Things* or her non-fiction. Another point is that she intrudes in the narrative with her point of view. Critics have also found obvious resemblance between the events and characters of *The God of Small Things* and the writer's real life (Tiwary and Chandra). So we can safely relate the ideology of the novel with the ideology of Roy herself.

In her non-fictional writings, Roy makes her position even more unequivocal. She strongly asserts, "I take sides. I take a position. What's worse I make it clear that it's right and moral to take that position and what's even worse, use everything in my power to flagrantly solicit support for that position" (*Algebra* 197). Here she admits that, whether it is real life or her fiction, she holds position. This means that her

characters are also designed according to their ideological positions and certain characters receive her ideological favour.

The Naxalite movement began in 1967 with farmers fighting landlords in a tiny patch of rural Bengal abutting the tea gardens (Chakravarty 7). Its aim was to transform the semi-colonial and semi feudal India into a people's republic of India through the use of protracted armed struggle and its guiding ideology was Mao Tse-tung's thought (Singh 23). Singh cites the full text Naxalite document in his work *The Naxalite Movement in India* which is very enlightening to understand the Maoist ideology:

Armed struggle is the only correct road for the Indian revolution; there is no other road whatsoever. Such trash as "Gandhism", "parliamentary road" and the like are opium used by the Indian ruling classes to paralyse the Indian people. Only by relying on violent revolution and taking the road of armed struggle can India be saved and the Indian people achieve complete liberation. . . . By using flexible strategy and tactic of people's war personally worked out by Chairman Mao, and to persist in protracted armed struggle and seizing victory of revolution step by step. (262)

Roy might not subscribe to these views completely. But she certainly agrees to them to a greater extent. Like the Naxalites she does not believe in the parliamentary politics. She also holds similar views regarding the role of the Indian ruling class. So far as the need of the violent armed struggle, she accepts it so long as it resists the power which serves the oppressive corporate interests and different forms of conventional forces. To quote her views on the Indian state and the class it serves in her words:

The Indian state is not a state that has failed. It is a state that has succeeded impressively in what it set out to do. It has been ruthlessly efficient in the way it has appropriated India's resources—its land, its water, its forests, its fish, its meat, its eggs, its air—and redistributed it to a favoured few (in return, no doubt, for a few favours). It is superbly accomplished in the art of protecting its cadres of paid-up elite, consummate in its methods of pulverizing those who inconvenience its intentions. (*Algebra* 69)

The main point about her opinion is that the Indian state is the state of the upper class and it successfully serves its interests. It is ruthless to those who disagree with or opposes it. Her ideas are very similar to the Maoist analysis about the character of the Indian state politics. In her non-fictional works Roy emphasises the need of resistance by the oppressed from the locations where they are powerful, not from where the enemies are strong. She opines:

[b]eing poor is not the same thing as being weak. The strength of the poor is not indoors in office buildings and classrooms. It's outdoors, in the fields, the mountains, the river valleys, the city streets and university campuses of this country. That's where negotiations must be held. That is where the battle must be waged. (*Ordinary* 235)

By locating outside field as the spaces for actions, she indicates how the oppressed cannot fight from within the legal framework permitted by the state. She feels that within the narrow legal confinement, they cannot fight as they need to. In her non-fiction she repeatedly stresses on the need of the resistance from those who have been subject to brutal oppression and exploitation. By resistance she does not only to express dissent, but to effectively force change (*Ordinary* 299).

Roy's radical views have found expression in her opinion about peace and violence. She does not think that these concepts are completely opposed to each other. Rather, they can be complementary and relative. She states that there can be no real peace without justice and without resistance there will be no justice (*Ordinary* 331). When she talks about resistance, she means, along with other means, violent means as well. She is not ready to condemn all forms of violence indiscriminately. For her revolutionary violence is justifiable whereas the state sponsored violence is unjust, for the former is a compulsion for resistance but the latter is for dominance of the people. She alleges that "non-violent movements have knocked at the door of every democratic institution in this country for decades and have been spurned and humiliated" (*Shape* 222). She further adds:

In a climate like this, when people feel that they are being worn down, exhausted by these interminable 'democratic' processes, only to be eventually humiliated, what are they supposed to do? . . . There are political parties that believe in armed struggle but only as one part of their overall political strategy. Politically workers in these struggles have been dealt with brutally, killed, beaten, and imprisoned under false charges. . . . But when people decide to take that step because every other option has ended in despair, should we condemn them? (*Shape* 233-34)

The message is clear. It does not need any explanation. Roy alleges that the ruling class is responsible for both: oppressing the masses and compelling them to take arms. Roy not only feels the need of resistance (even violent) but also defends it from the charges hurled at them from different angles.

Kanu Sanyal, one of the pioneers of the Naxalbari uprising, has distanced himself from much of the movement today arguing that it has become extortionist, without ideology, predatory on the very poor it seeks to support (qtd in Roy, *Shape* 217). Sanyal does not see any utility and relevance of the ongoing Maoist movement in India. He sees it merely as a form of exploitative aimless project, without being guided by Marxist principles. His accusations have become a very useful pretext to denounce the movement and also to brutally suppress it. Since he is one of the originators of the movement, it is a hard blow to those who still operate it and those who support it. It is very difficult to defend it. In spite of all this, Roy sees its need and relevance and has come forward to defend it. This is something wonderful about her. She argues:

I'm sure Mahatma Gandhi would say the same of the Congress Party today. Every armed struggle will have its share of thugs and extortionists, along for the ride only for personal gain. . . . , I'm sure among the Maoist too. It also exists in the armed forces—every occupying army has its share of looters and rapists. But the phenomenon has arisen because people have had the doors of the liberal democratic institutions slammed in their faces. To dismiss them all as extortionists and freeloaders is not only just deeply apolitical, it's extremely unjust. (*Shape* 217)

She finds the Maoist movement defensible on two counts: first it is not their chosen path, but they are compelled to take it by the establishment itself. Secondly, not to see its positive aspects but to see the whole movement in the negative light is unjust. She strongly believes that every peaceful and legal path is closed for them. She goes on arguing:

What I feel is this: non-violent movements have knocked at the door of every democratic institution in this country for decades and have been spurned and humiliated. Look at the Bhopal gas victims, the Narmada Bachao Andolan. . . .For example, is mass civil disobedience possible within the structure of a democratic nation state? Is it possible in the age of disinformation and corporate-controlled mass media? Are hunger strikes umbilically linked to celebrity politics? Would anybody care if the people of Nangla Machi or Bhatti mines went on a hunger strike? . . . I've always felt that it's ironic that hunger strikes are used as a political weapon in a land where most people go hungry anyway. (*Shape* 222)

Roy is not advocating violence for violence's sake. She approves it as the last resort in case other means have become ineffectual. She implies that if the ruling class was willing to address the peaceful demands of the oppressed, then there would no violence on the part of the latter. She finds this situation in the present day India. Of the Maoist movement as a whole she opines:

Right now, in India, the Maoists and the various Marxist-Leninist groups are leading the fight against immense injustice here. They are fighting not just the state, but feudal landlords and their armed militias. They are the only people who are making a dent. And I admire that. . . .It is important to acknowledge that they are bearing the brunt of being at the forefront of *resistance*. (emphasis added, *Shape* 230)

So, to Roy resistance to oppression is what matters most and the Maoists are at the forefront of it. This is the common zone between the Maoist and Roy. However, Roy is not unaware of defects and deviations in the Maoist movement. There are charges

against it under the pretext of impurity in their movement. Some allege that the government and the Maoist both are equally guilty in preferring violence to peaceful means. To such objections, she replies:

But to equate *a resistance movement fighting against enormous injustice* with the government which enforces that injustice is absurd. The government has slammed the door in the face of every attempt at non-violent resistance. When people take to arms, there is going to be all kinds of violence-revolutionary, lumpen and outright criminal. The government is responsible for the monstrous situations it creates.

(emphasis added, *Shape* 227)

So the state is responsible either way for the violence. By closing the door of peaceful resistance and also by suppressing it, the government makes a room for the violent struggle. So far as the bad elements in the Maoist movement are concerned, it is because the society teaches people to go for criminal activities. The cadres join the movement but some of them succumb to the old social habit. Whatever the situation, there should be effective resistance to the inhuman injustice-this is the line of Roy's thought, expressed either in her non-fiction or her fiction *The God of Small Things*.

From the discussion above we can come to the conclusion that Roy's ideology is the ideology of resistance to injustice all forms that are engendered and promoted by the state violence. For her the Maoist movement in India, which is also famously known as the Naxalite movement, is a just and necessary movement. Now is the time to see how this has been represented in *The God of Small Things*.

The God of Small Things contains the same ideology as the ideology Roy has articulated in her prose works. Like them the novel also presents the Maoist movement as a movement of resistance. She has privileged the Naxalite related

characters over non-Naxalite ones. I want to reiterate the fact that the novel has the Naxalite movement on its background. That is why it is necessary to discuss a little about the movement and its ideology before entering into its representation in the novel.

The Naxalite movement started in 1967 “with farmers fighting landlords in a tiny patch of rural Bengal abutting the tea gardens” (Chakravarty 7). On April 22, 1969 the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) was formed which laid down the tactic and strategy of the armed struggle in India under the guidance of Maoist ideology (Singh 26). It defined India as a semi-colonial and semi-feudal country and the Indian state as the state of the big landlords and comprador-bureaucrat capitalist (Singh 27). It aimed at smashing the state power through protracted people’s war and establishing the dictatorship of the working class, the peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie, and even a section of small and middle bourgeoisie under the leadership of the working class (Singh 39). The party proclaimed a fourteen-point programme which includes, along with other radical programs, the abolition of “the caste system” and removal of “all social inequalities and discrimination on religious grounds and guarantee equality of status to women” (qtd in Singh 41).

The Naxalite movement also put forth the concept of the new man. Charu Mazumdar, the progenitor and much revered leader of the movement, outlines what a new man is and how s/he comes into being:

Without class struggle-the battle of annihilation-the initiative of the poor peasant masses cannot be released, the political consciousness of the fighters cannot be raised, the new man cannot emerge. . . Only by waging class struggle- the battle of annihilation- the new man will be

created, the new man who will defy death and will be free from all thoughts of self-interest. (qtd in Chakrabarty 83)

Mazumdar's concept of the new man contains at least three qualities: he should come from class struggle; he should be equipped with political consciousness; he should have death defying spirit which also includes defying his own personal interests. Class struggle, which is specified as annihilation, is a very important form of resistance. But only that is not enough; political consciousness is also necessary because without it the resistance can be directionless. So it is not only resistance but resistance guided by Maoist ideology is essential. The third important criterion is the death defying spirit without which the class enemy cannot be hit and destroyed.

The God of Small Things is set in the mid sixties, the high tide period of the Naxalite movement. The atmosphere of the novel permeates with the influence of the movement as a threatening force for the dominant class and established order:

Peking switched its patronage to the newest, most militant faction of the CPI (M)-the Naxalite-who had staged an armed insurrection in Naxalbari, a village in Bengal. They organized peasants into fighting cadres, seized land, expelled the owners and established People's Courts to try Class Enemies. The Naxalite movement spread across the country and struck terror in every bourgeois heart. (68)

Besides being a matter of fact reportage, the quote pictures the movement in the positive light. It does not present the movement as a terror to the general public, but only to the class enemies, identified as 'every bourgeois heart'. The cadres are not pictured as aliens, but as the peasants who have suffered the brutal exploitation of the landlords. It also presents the movement as ascending to be nationwide. Certainly, Roy's tone is positive. The same kind of terror of revolution is felt by Baby

Kochamma while she watches TV news in her room. Her fears are not real, but they are “old fears of the Revolution and the Marxist-Leninist *menace* had been rekindled” by the BBC news (emphasis added 28). Here the Marxist-Leninist ideology is a source of menace to Baby Kochamma who has associated herself with the dominant class. This is reason of her feeling terror at the mere mentioning of the revolution which took place in the past. The presence of the Naxalite is threatening not only to the dominant order but also to the mainstream left which promised an alternative political order but has been co-opted into the establishment:

Two local party members, Comrade J. Kuttakaran and Comrade Guhan Menon had been expelled from the Party as suspected Naxalites. One of them-Comrade Guhan Menon- was tipped to be the Party’s candidate for the Kottayam by-elections to the Legislative Assembly due next March. His expulsion from the Party created a vacuum that a number of hopefuls were jockeying to fill. (119)

The expulsion of the two party members as suspected Naxalites is an indication of division and disintegration in the party which believes in the parliamentary politics. Comrade Menon must be a high profile local leader of the Marxist party. If such a leader can desert the party for the Naxalite movement, many grass root members might follow suit. The point to remember here is that the Naxalites, who organised themselves as the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist), were also a broken away faction from the Communist Party of India (Marxist) to which Namboodiripad is the General Secretary. The vacuum after the expulsion (or desertion?) of Menon leaves the Marxist party in further crisis and internal strife because there are many rivals (one is no doubt Pillai) to fill the space. In this sense the emergence of the Naxalite movement moves forward generating multiple crises in the dominant order.

The Naxalite pervades the novel as the source of fear for those who commit crimes and intend to escape the consequences. This episode serves an example:

She was aware of his libertine relationship with the women in the factory, but had ceased to be hurt by them. When Baby Kochamma brought up the subject, Mammachi became tense and tight-lipped. ‘He can’t help having a Man’s Needs,’ she said primly.

Surprisingly, Baby Kochamma accepted this explanation, and the enigmatic notion of Man’s Needs gained implicit sanction in the Ayamenem house. Neither Mammachi nor Baby Kochamma saw any contradiction between Chacko’s Marxist mind and feudal libido. They only worried about the Naxalites, who had been known to force men from Good Families to marry servant girls whom they had made pregnant. (168)

Despite belonging to the margin, Baby Kochamma and Mammachi have adopted dominant ideology. They have internalised the male bourgeois values which makes one treat women mere play things. Both think it natural that Chacko has the right to have sex with his female workers, although the relationship is exploitative. Again the Naxalites are present in their psyche as a spectre, to terrify them of the consequence. Generally, when a rich man (a man from good family), makes a poor girl pregnant, he goes unpunished. In some cases, he can escape by paying some money as compensation. The world does not take it otherwise. But the emergence of the Naxalite movement has changed this situation. It has created fear in those who indulge in exploitative sexual activities. This is a challenge to the male chauvinistic social order. At the same time we can see that Roy is taking the Naxalite movement as

a necessary form of resistance to oppression. In this sense she is not averse to communism as Aamad has claimed.

Another place where the emergent ideology operates to challenge the dominance of the bourgeoisie is the second chapter of the novel in which the protesting workers surround Chacko's Plymouth and terrify the inmates, especially, Baby Kochamma. Even Aizaz Ahamad has admitted that this is the "only place where class conflict is portrayed with any real feeling for the situation" (103).

As I have already mentioned in the previous section, the protest march was organized by "the Travancore-Cochin Marxist Labour Union" to demand an hour's lunch break in eleven hour working day and a slight increase in women's wages (69). Although the operative ideology behind the protest and the demands themselves are not radical, it has resistant tendency in the seminal form because the participants are from the lowest strata of the society and they have stood to take the matters in their own hands. In the novel Roy herself hints this side of the march: "The marchers that day were party workers, students, and the labourers themselves. Touchables and Untouchables. On their shoulders they carried a keg of ancient anger, lit with a recent fuse. There was an edge to this anger that was Naxalite, and new" (69). Roy explicitly remarks that, despite everything, the pervading spirit of the protest was Naxalite. The composition of the protest and the anger of the age-long oppression testify to it. Although the protest was largely peaceful, it was stormy enough to terrify those who are either bourgeois themselves or have associated themselves with the latter. For example, Baby Kochamma reacts thus:

Baby Kochamma's fear lay rolled up on the car floor like a damp, clammy cheroot. This was just the beginning of it. The fear that over the years would grow to consume her. That would make her lock her

doors and windows. That would give her two hairlines and both her mouths. Hers, too, was an ancient, age-old fear. The fear of being dispossessed. (70)

Here the fear of Baby Kochamma is finely juxtaposed with the anger of the marchers. Another point of contradistinction is that both, the anger of the marchers and Kochamma's fear, are cumulative because both have come down to the present from the ancient times. The former are angry because they are dispossessed the latter is fearful because she thinks she has a lot to lose. The conflictual relationship of domination and dominated is not momentary but age-long. In this sense they both are impersonal agencies because they represent two opposed classes. Furthermore, the protesters are associated with the explosive materials whereas the lady is juxtaposed with damp imagery. This also implies the contrary attributes of them. Furthermore, the elusive presence of Velutha (the Naxalite connected 'untouchable' worker) in the protest enhances its radical importance (71). The 'new' element in the march indicates the emerging Naxalite force.

The materialisation of the clashes of contradictory ideologies reaches its climax when the angry marchers force Baby Kochamma to chant their slogans and wave the communist flag:

The man like a knot gave Baby Kochamma his red flag as a present.

'Here,' he said. 'Hold it.'

Baby Kochamma held it, still not looking at him.

'Wave it,' he ordered.

She had to wave it. She had no choice. It smelled of new cloth and a shop. Crisp and dusty. She tried to wave it as though she wasn't waving it.

‘Now say *Inqulab Zindabad!*’

‘*Inqulab Zindabad,*’ Baby Kochamma whispered.

‘Good girl.’

The crowd roared with laughter. A shrill whistle blew. (80)

I have already asserted that because of her traditional attitude to the issues like caste, class and gender, she places herself in antagonism with ‘the untouchable,’ the working class and oppressed women. Because of the same reason, she harbours fear of the Naxalite and revolution. I have also stated that the sky blue Plymouth is associated with dominant order because it is a symbol of bourgeois success in the literal as well as metaphorical sense. The marchers do not target the other inmates like Ammu and even Chacko. Only she is targeted. When we consider her role in the novel to bring about the tragedy of Ammu and Velutha(thought it took place much later), it is justifiable to humiliate her by the working class mass. Susan Comfort has noticed “elite status” and “the comprador relations with British colonial power” about her (12). So we can come to the conclusion that by their actions over her persona, the mass is challenging and resisting all forms of bourgeois dominance by using and exercising the radical Naxalite ideology that was in the air of the time.

The most evident resistant/radical ideology operates in Ammu-Velutha transgressive love and the resulting heroic death of the latter. Although Ahamad declines to give “the erotic as the real zone of rebellion and Truth” because he finds it “individual and fragile” (107), Critics like Brinda Bose, Narendra Tiwary and N. D. R. Chandra have noticed that in *The God of Small Things*, it is linked with radical politics. I also want to show that the forbidden sex between them has much wider significance in striking the age-long class/class/gender discrimination and domination.

The main thrust of ideology of *The God of Small Things* lies in the red politics of Velutha and Ammu's unstated support of it. Velutha's radical identity is emphasised with the repeated association of him with red colour and his suspected involvement in the Naxalite movement.

Velutha is a young 'untouchable' but accomplished carpenter. He is a card-holding member of the Marxist party to which Comrade Pillai also belongs (121, 277). Although he belongs to the same party as Pillai which has adopted the opportunist line, Velutha is not tainted by its capitulationism. His involvement only indicates the sharpness of his consciousness. He belongs to that party organisationally, but ideologically, he follows radical politics carried out by the Naxalites. The contrast between Pillai's opportunism and his radicalism can be seen in the contrast in the differing shades of red associated to each of them. From Comrade Pillai's flag "the red had bled away" (13). On the other hand, Velutha is consistently associated with bright red. When he appears for the first time in the novel, he is shown "marching with a red flag" which is "the most impressive piece of equipment" (71). He is also pictured as a carpenter with "gaudy nails" (190), "blood-red nails" (191, 307) and "red varnish on his nails" (288). Towards the end of the story, he is brutally beaten by the police and made unconscious. Just before the death, he bleeds profusely and the bleeding is "the blood on his breath bright red" (310). It is obvious that that the bright red signifies the radical Naxalite ideology. Because of this, the elusive presence of Velutha makes the protest march the centre of ideological conflict and the zone of resistance. By portraying Velutha, the Naxalite figure, in the positive light, Roy has certainly highlighted the Maoist ideology as the ideology of resistance to the dominance of the oppressing class. Because of this, we can state that *The God of Small Things* is not a wholesale critique of communist ideology. It is only

critique of one faction of communists which has deviated from the radical Marxism and gone for the parliamentary politics which Roy herself shuns.

Velutha's resistance puts on further strength from his suspected Naxalite connection. At no point in the novel is clearly stated his Naxal identity. It is presented in the form of conjectures and hearsays. One of them is:

Then one day he disappeared. For four years nobody knew where he was. There was a rumour that he was working on a building site for the Department of Welfare and Housing in Trivandrum. And more recently, the inevitable rumour that he had become a Naxalite. That he had been to prison. Somebody said that they had seen him in Quilon.

(77)

This enhances his radical identity further. Historically speaking, a notable point about this is that the Naxalites themselves were a breakaway faction from the Communist Party of India (Marxist). Many of the members remained on the border line zone for a long time. So Velutha's ambivalence is, as the novel shows, backed by historical facts.

Velutha is multiply exploited and oppressed. First of all he is a Paravan, an 'untouchable.' This places him in lowest position in the society despite the fact that he is "the god of small things" (217). He is called so, besides other things, for his skills and accomplishments. As a working class person, his labour power is naturally exploited in the factory. In addition, if he is given extra wages for his extra carpentry, "it caused a great deal of resentment among the other Touchable factory workers because, according to them, Paravans were not *meant* to be carpenters" (77). This way he is dominated not only by the factory owner, but also by the touchable co-workers themselves. His political contribution is not acknowledged by the party when he is in

trouble. When he is falsely accused of attempting rape of Ammu(259), kidnapping and murder (303), he seeks Comrade Pillai's guidance and protection, but the latter refuses to listen to his troubles, let alone the guidance and support. Finally, he falls victim to the brutal Indian state and dies a martyr's death, without being recognised.

The multiplicity of oppression and marginality enhances his understanding of the matters, sharpens his consciousness and strengthens his courage, fighting spirit and determination. In one place he is shown struggling amidst woes: "The last betrayal that sent Velutha across the river, *swimming against the currents*, in the dark and rain, well in time for his blind date with history" (emphasis added 282). This is the most vivid and impressive imagery to picture the adverse situation that Velutha is in and his tragically heroic struggle against it. The last betrayal indicates the betrayal by Pillai. His indomitable courage and fighting spirit is expressed in his picture as swimming against the currents. The adverse currents indicate the traditional forces which, despite superficial changes in the Indian state and the society, still dominate the toiling masses. Velutha's attempt to go against them is to challenge that dominance. His blind date with history refers to his tragic death at the hands of the police. Anyway, he goes against them.

The Ammu-Velutha erotic relationship transcends the personal and cultural significance. It incorporates political and ideological significance, especially, when we consider the latter's involvement in the Naxalite movement and the former's silent approval of it and its stark contrast with other love/marriage relationships in the novel. To quote the exact words from the novel, through it they have made "unthinkable thinkable and the impossible really happen" (256). In this connection Brinda Bose, refuting Ahamad's objection to the aforementioned relationship, opines that "there are certain kinds of politics that have more to do with interpersonal relations than with

grand revolutions, that the most personal dilemmas can also become public causes, that erotic can also be a politics” (qtd in Tickell 129).

A few points require further elucidation. If (any form of) interpersonal relationship is connected with certain causes, let’s say revolutionary causes, it becomes political/ideological. Ammu is the only conscious female character in the novel who can see through the exploitation/domination operative in all forms of human relationship. Only she has the intelligence, desire, energy and spirit to break them. She hits her alcoholic husband when he asks her to offer herself to Hollick (42). The novel highlights her dominant trait this way:

What was it that gave Ammu this Unsafe Edge? This air of unpredictability? It was what she had battling inside her. An unmixable mix. The infinite tenderness of motherhood and the reckless rage of a suicide bomber. It was this that grew inside her, and eventually led her to love by night the man her children loved by day. To use by night the boat her children used by day. (44)

‘Her reckless rage of a suicide bomber’ is the source of her courage and spirit to make love with someone whom the society does not think fit touching. Mere carnal lust does not enable one to establish such a forbidden relation. One must have some sense of commitment and determination. In this regard Bose’s ideas are very appropriate and enlightening:

Apparently Ammu is not dismissive of Velutha’s red politics, sees in its inherent anger a possibility of relating to Velutha’s mind, not just his body. Her own politics are embedded in her ‘rage’ against the various circumstances of her life, and it is through this sense of shared raging that she finds it possible to desire the Untouchable Velutha. It is

not only sexual gratification that she seeks; she seeks also to touch the Untouchable (qtd in Eagleton 125).

Bose has emphatically stressed that Ammu's relationship with Velutha is a lot more than physical. It has a political dimension, too. She means to say that Ammu has joined her rage with the red politics of Velutha against various forms of injustice. Her sex with him is an act of transgression; it is the breaking of oppressive social norms; so, it is a violent form of resistance through the use of, traditionally, the most sacred, hence, the protected zone.

Regarding the importance of women's participation in resistance movements, Roy strongly believes that "a political struggle that does not have women at the heart of it, above it, below it, and within it, is no struggle at all" (*Ordinary* 351-52). Women's participation is necessary because they comprise one half of the humanity. Whatever class they belong to, they are exploited and oppressed. She believes that without their active involvement, the struggle for justice and change loses much of its strength. She also implies that a separate or purely feminist movement cannot bear any fruit. All oppressed people, she believes, should unite their strength. Ammu-Velutha relationship unites the gender issue with class/caste trajectory.

The pattern of Ammu-Velutha love is fundamentally different from the other man-woman relationships that are available in *The God of Small Things*. The latter is based on the traditional pattern of relationship in which women are either passive appendage to their husbands or they are brutally dominated. Their function is confined to producing successors for bourgeois property. They feel satisfied in their role as baby producing machine. In such cases, the women are guided by false consciousness. So, they are unaware of the situation they are in. They do not feel that the situation can be changed in their favour. But Ammu-Velutha relationship is

guided by class consciousness. It is based on equality and mutual respect. It is an important part of the resistance movement. It founded on the faith that change is necessary and possible.

Mammachi, for example, does not have identity except as the submissive wife of a jealous, dominative husband. Chacko's relationship with female workers is evidently exploitative. They are forced to satisfy his needs. Ammu's relationship with her husband is also founded on domination of the former by the latter. But Ammu-Velutha affair is completely different. It presents an ideal of how man-woman can achieve equality, harmony and mutual respect in love. This is particularly shown by narrating the love scene through Ammu's perspective, unlike the conventional male centred view:

. . . As she watched him she understood the quality of his beauty. How his labour had shaped him. How the wood he fashioned had fashioned him. Each plank he planed, each nail he drove, each thing he made, had moulded him. Had left its stamp on him. Had given him his strength, his supple grace.

. . . She could see his smile in the dark. His white, sudden smile that he had carried with him from boyhood into manhood. His only luggage.

(334)

Here the sensual geography of the male body is examined and experienced through female gaze. She is enjoying beauty of the sight of the male body. Another important point is that Roy has conflated beauty with labour. The idea that one's beauty is the outcome of physical labour, not of artificial/commercial project, is undoubtedly radical and revolutionary.

Bose has noticed another notable point in Ammu-Velutha relationship. She remarks that “it is Ammu who actually takes initiative in destroying the sexual taboo” (qtd in Tickell 124). This also has political dimension, namely feminist dimension.

For example:

She went to him and laid the length of her body against his. He just stood there. He didn't touch her. He was shivering. . . Despite his fear his body was prepared to take the bait. It wanted her. Urgently. . . She put her arms around him.

She could hear the wild hammering of his heart.

She held him till it calmed down. Somewhat.

She unbuttoned her shirt. They stood there. Skin to skin. (334)

This description simply reverses the traditional leading and dominating role of the male in sexual politics. In fact the narrative abounds in such minutely detailed description of the love scene in which Ammu takes the initiative. Roy has adopted radical feminist ideology in dealing with the matters of man woman relationship.

False charges of rape and kidnapping on Velutha, his heroic endurance of brutal police brutality and his consequent tragic death marks the climax of the conflict between two opposing forces of history. It resolves the conflict temporarily in favour of the dominant order. However, his sacrifice leaves the emergent forces morally on the higher plain because it discloses treachery of the state, its machinery and those who support it. It discloses how the ruling class withdraws from its own avowed principles like so called peaceful transition, democracy, the rule of law and human rights when the oppressed people try to stand erect and live like humans. His martyrdom destabilises the dominant order to its foundation because the deep-seated sense of injustice and desire of revenge in the oppressed can rise to the surface any

time and violence can erupt in much larger magnitude. History abounds in such events. Roy' *The God of Small Things* has honestly mirrored this aspect of the reality.

In this way *The God of Small Things* represents the resistance of the marginalised Indian people to the dominance of the ruling class. It operates through the radical ideology of the Naxalite movement and the characters like Velutha and Ammu who are directly or indirectly involved in it. Velutha's martyrdom marks the peak point of the resistance of the oppressed to the dominant order. To designate it as anti-communist is to ignore substantial amount of textual and contextual proofs.

Conclusion

Arundhati Roy's fiction *The God of Small Things*, as a form of literary discourse, embodies social, economic, political, religious and cultural conflicts that have been operating in the post-independent India. These forces, despite their diversity, fall under three categories—dominant, middle way and emergent. The Indian state, the elite it serves and the mainstream political parties belong to the dominant class. The opportunism of the parliamentarian left, which also contributes to the consolidation of the status quo, makes the second group. The workers, poor peasants, women and the 'untouchables' and the Naxalites comprise the oppressed class. These classes are in constant struggles guided by opposite world views. In this regard false consciousness is an ideological tool of the ruling class to maintain their dominance over the oppressed. It is the ideology of the society and the oppressed also internalise it, misguide themselves and prove a useful tool for the ruling class. But this dominance rarely goes unchallenged. Dominance and suppression give rise to resistance and rebellion of the oppressed. In their struggle against the ruling class, the oppressed adopt class consciousness as the emergent ideology. As a realist novel *The God of Small Things* mirrors the conflict between these ideologies. But Arundhati Roy is not only a novelist, she is also an activist and polemicist. She holds radical views on the issues like Maoist movement, globalisation, the rights of Adivasis and Dalits and big dam projects. Her anti-establishment views have found expression in her non-fiction like *The Algebra of Infinite Justice*, *An Ordinary Person's Guide to Empire*, *The Shape of the Beast* and *Listening to Grasshoppers*. The views which she has expressed in these non-fictional works have found expression in her only fiction and shaped the outcome of the ideological clashes it depicts.

The dominant ideology or false consciousness gets manifestation in the actions of the characters like Papachi, Hollock, and police inspector Thomas Mathew, who are associated with the ruling class. Characters from the margin and the oppressed class like Mammachi, Kochu Maria and Vellya Paapen also share the same world view like the oppressors. Symbols like the sky blue Plymouth, the history house the cable television also indicate the operation of the dominant order. By their duplicities and deceptions, the Marxist party, its leaders Namboodiripad and Pillai and the Marxist intellectual Chacko also mislead and oppress people and consequently, consolidate the dominant order.

Ammu, Velutha and the Naxalite movement represent the emergent or resistant ideology. Ammu and Velutha break the class/caste restrictions imposed by the dominant order and the Naxalite movement provide them with moral and ideological boost. All traditional forces become one against them and they meet tragic but glorious end, challenging and destabilising the dominant order.

In this way Roy's novel shows how the dominance of one class invariably invites the resistance from the dominated and brings forth the corresponding clashes in their relations and in the realm of ideologies. It shows how total and unchallenged dominance one class is impossible. It also shows that dominance of false consciousness and enlightened false consciousness ultimately gives rise to class consciousness as the emergent ideology. It is just like day is bound to appear after night, false consciousness and enlightened false consciousness invariably result in class consciousness. By means of her fiction and non-fiction, Roy has depicted this.

In this way *The God of Small Things* shows the ideologies in fierce clashes-clashes between the dominant and the resistant ideologies. The author has strongly projected her radical position in the characters, images and events which stand against

the establishment. She has projected the radical ideology as the ideology of the novel. She has sided with the emergent ideology by privileging the Naxalite related protagonist Velutha and the Naxalite movement itself over the forces associated with the dominant order. She accomplishes this by means of narratorial commentaries on events and characters. Roy's radicalism and the ideology of the Naxalite movement converge in *The God of Small Things* as the emergent ideology.

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